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[It has occurred to the Editor as a perfectly new and original idea that as this is a holiday number, it will be well to offer his readers some help towards settling their holiday plans. He therefore entrusts the carrying out of this idea to his most trusted contributor, who discourses on the various types of watering-place as an aid towards answering the question now agitating many households, and which stands at the head of this article. As to the practical *value* of the dissertation he offers no opinion.—THE EDITOR.]

Where will you spend your Holiday?

By EDWIN WOOTON.

THERE are three different kinds of marine watering-place in England—the risen, the rising, and the criminal. The way to learn all about them is to buy a seaside guide. This will have been compiled from local guides, and may be relied on to contain everything, true or otherwise, likely to prove serviceable in securing the visitor and his “oof.”

It is economical to buy a guide. One can always see in it more than at the place it describes. The man who buys, reads, believes, and stays at home, has, therefore, greatly the advantage of the man who travels in search of disappointment.

The criminal watering-place is referred to annually in newspaper columns and magazine pages, just on the eve of the seaside epidemic. It is spoken of almost whisperingly as “a paradise known to very few;” and those few not of the vulgar. It is said to contain everything desirable, and nothing otherwise. Board and lodging, you are assured, can be obtained on ridiculously cheap terms; and the bathing is conducted in pellucid water, running over yellow sands.

When you have been set down with your luggage on the platform of the station nearest to this Eden, you find yourself in the presence of two men, the stationmaster and the porter. Be assured that the looks with which they regard you are not intended to hurt your feelings. They are expressive, it is true, and true is that which they express. Don't resent it: there are probably three of you.

Your enquiry of the stationmaster is—"how are you to get to Boulder mud?" The conviction that first occupies your mind is the utter impossibility of getting there at all. Next, you discern clearly that if your boots will stand the wear, there is some hope of getting to Boulder mud about the middle of the night, but that your luggage will have to stay where it is until a wheelbarrow arrives from London. When, having thanked the official in silver, you are preparing to set out, your steps are arrested by a "Just one moment, sir!" and finally there is requisitioned a heretofore invisible native who happens to be going to Boulder mud, in some sort of vehicle attached to some sort of animal, apparently anxious to expire.

You learn on the road that the only house within ten miles, where there is a chance of obtaining a bed and something to eat is "The Haven," and you approach it in dazed wonder of *what* you will do "if they are full!"

It is with thankfulness and humility you receive the information they are *not* full. Your enquiry as to terms is merely formal. Rest, food and a wash you must have at any price. The landlady's statement is made in a tone indicating that no reasonable being could possibly expect to pay less. And as the figure named is prefaced by the word "from," any hopes of securing an abatement die before birth.

At the moment, you wish the gentleman who described the terms as "ridiculously cheap," were with you to divide the hilarious pleasure of paying them.

The caretaker of the curiosity that has brought you from the station is preparing to deposit the luggage in the front passage. He is anxious to get away and fetch his confounded load of potatoes or fish or something else that will not mix well with your trunks. This fact might be gathered from the expression on the landlady's face. While you are mentally debating whether you will undergo the ordeal of extortion or that of endeavouring to get your goods taken back to the station, they are removed from the cart. Standing in the room, which is cool, pleasant and restful after your hot journey, you

hear the boxes being conveyed into the passage. It is all over. With a blind defiance of bankruptcy, you pay the driver, agree to the landlady's weekly swindle, and are shown to your sleeping-chamber. A change of clothing, a cup of tea, and a wash, revolutionise your view of the universe. Boulder-mud looks bright, sunny, rural, and inviting; distinctly it is seashore. Are not odours of stale seaweed even now entering the room?

You burn to make a *confidant* of someone. Some few minutes since, you were hot, dusty, thirsty, tired and homeless. The landlady is the only being viewable. Fain would you tell her of your sadness and refreshing. The temptation is overcome; and furnished with topographical directions, you set forth, pipe in mouth, to seek the beach.

Your way leads through a cutting, labelled on a painted board, "Beach Road." The road rises gradually, and opens upon the highest part of the shingle. Below, is the limitless, ever-moving sea. Its being there seems wonderful; its not being there would be so, indeed. To the left lies an appalling line of sand and stones, unrelieved by anything livelier than cast-up seaweed and a dead dog. This line extends to the haze, veiled promontory, that marks that atrociously vulgar place, Winkle-on-the-Sands. To the right, a similar view is to be seen, but it is interrupted by a few huddled roofs. Turning in the latter direction, you sample various heights of the beach as a walking surface, and presently have opportunity for investigating, at as near a distance as you please, six tarred cottages, two sheds, and half-a-dozen boats. The mariners standing by do not regard you as did the railway officials: *they* thought you a fool: nor as did the landlady: she had the expression of a spider who has captured a nice succulent fly. To these mariners you are "a Lunnion chap," and their opinions divide on the point as to whether you are a lawyer "arter" someone, or a "sharper runned away."

If you have mentally fed on the foundationless but dearly cherished tradition of the harmlessness and instructive conversation of all who follow the sea, you will fraternise with the mariners, and get them to yarn. When, in exchange for tobacco and the price of beer, as great a quantity of jargon has been received as your head can give passage to without aching at the ear of entrance or exit, you wander back, trying to believe you are steeped in innocent enjoyment.

On the next morning, you sample the bathing. Wherever you

pitch your clothes, the stones appear to be much of the same hardness, and those below water to be as disagreeable to kick against.

As you dress, in the course thereof, picking out a few bits of dead seaweed and dead crab from your shirt, and rubbing your bruised toe, you look longingly at far-away Winkle-on-the-Sands, and wish, with diabolical intensity, you had in your clutches, just for one moment, the asterisked liar, who led you to this asterisked place of fraud, torture and desolation.

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It is a notable fact, that few marine watering-places, other than the criminal, are without an "interesting historic ruin" in their neighbourhood. It is open to consideration whether resorts not so favoured by circumstances, would not do well to establish a museum for ruined visitors.

The watering-place guide-book revels in historic ruins. It dwells with ghoulish appetite on the number of corpses buried there. Tombs are to it places where a happy day may be spent; funerals and murders are incidents whose description is soothing to the jaded traveller.

The next best thing to a ruin is a good old churchyard. The guide-book compiler knows the weakness of his countrymen. He is aware that when they find themselves in a strange place, they seek out the cemeteries and churchyards, possibly with the prudent determination to anticipate the worst that can happen, by selecting a decent spot to be buried in. Possibly, also, some of them feel it must be *better* to be buried than to go on existing in——; name the place how you choose.

The rising watering-place invariably presents a useful object lesson in the art of building. By conducting one's festivities among the bricks and mortar with which the roads, including the parade, are strewn, it is possible to acquire familiarity with the details of a useful industry quite in the kindergarten style.

All corporations of rising watering-places are in league with the shoemakers. The former cover the roads with stones, having the size of small cocoanuts, and leave the wearing down process to be done by visitors' boots. The stones return the good endeavour; a steam roller is no longer needed, the shoe trade flourishes, but the visitor mourns.

It is impossible for a watering-place to do much rising without an

hotel. We are all familiar with the hotel; we have seen it advertised in the railway stations. The advertisements contain an illustration representing the front of a palatial abode, which is being approached by a lady, a gentleman, and a remarkably rare kind of dog. The gentleman is pointing with his stick, in manner to say, "There, my dear; we have not lived in vain: at length we see *the* Mudville Hotel. What a thing it is to be a Briton!"

The Solomon who helps a watering-place to do its rising, is always apparently under the impression that the town visitor yearns to revel in entertainments closely resembling, but inferior to those he has been satiated with in the great cities. Solomon encourages this taste by affording facilities to travelling dramatic companies, circuses, nigger minstrels, German bands, and organ grinders for enlivening his neighbourhood. Solomon also understands that people who have convenient access to such photographic establishments as are to be found in Regent and Baker Streets, would be sadly disappointed, did they not find on the beach the individual with the tripod, who earns a living by caricaturing God's image.

When Solomon has done his utmost, and you think, as you gaze at the scene on the beach, how like it is to the recreation ground of a lunatic asylum, it is time to get the next train to somewhere else.

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Of risen watering-places, there are many sub-varieties. One is the odoriferous, and may be exemplified by——. But as, if you are a Londoner, an equally good quality of ozone can be obtained by leaning over a sewer grating, it seems wilful extravagance to throw away the railway fare. Another sub-variety was intended by Providence for very superior people. It is a self-measured suit, but visitors think it fits. Any one such place will yield a plenitude of subjects for meditation. You observe that according to the code which obtains here, the visitor if a female, must prove her superiority by bringing seven or eight dresses of the latest fashion and most costly material; and by wearing all the inconvenient accessories to which she has been accustomed in town. To dispense with gloves is to violate the code. Her parasol must at least be edged with costly lace. Thus arrayed, she will waddle to the beach, parade or pier, and may safely trust herself to the dictates of her nature. These compel her to inspect the costume of every female approaching her, to estimate the cost of each article the other may have on, and to look carefully

at her gloves to see whether there are any holes in them ; also, if her energy will allow, to take a glance at her boots to see how they are wearing.

If this other be ugly, badly dressed, and of humble appearance, criticism would be wasted. If she be ugly and well dressed, sneers and disparaging remarks will be confined to her costume. Should the visitor find herself much outshone, she will probably remark to a companion, "Dressed up, vulgar thing!"

You will observe that this volunteer inspector of clothing has a choice selection of blackguardisms. Those apparently superior to her in social standing, are designated "snobs ;" those inferior are termed "cads." The word "shop girl" and "counter-jumper," are slung at everyone who has ears to be hit, with the accuracy of a blind man shooting at a shadow ; while the term "clerk," is intended to carry annihilation to some aristocratic swell, whom she has tried vainly to fascinate.

If, my reader, you have not yet found happiness, try the proximity of a garrison town ; Squadronville may serve. What constitutes happiness ? The satisfaction of one's desires. What is the chief desire of nine male civilians out of ten in Squadronville society ? To be thought "officers in the army!"

See how meritoriously they labour for this great end—and for that matter with what equal energy the real officers seek to be mistaken for civilians.

You note how carefully the civilians imitate the officers' mufti, and how they study the military swagger or military stalk. The secret of the swagger may be acquired from watching the perambulation of a goose. The infantry stalk is best learnt by thinking you are carrying a plate of hot soup on your head.

Whatever the watering-place, the longshore mariner presents himself prominently as an object of interest. When visitors are not about, or the weather is bad, he leans one side of him against a rail. If he has some 'baccy he smokes ; if he hasn't he spits instead ; and gazing into the distance, be it seaward or heavenward, remains in one position till he desires a change, when he tries the effect of the other side of him against the rail. Then a mate slouches up and helps in the leaning business, and after a third and a fourth have arrived and found something to support their sides, they all settle into helpless apathy, and spit. If any one of them is requested to perform "a job,"

he may tell you that he is "waitin' to see arter someone's bo-at," or that he is "paintin' a craft," or something else clearly indicating that he has not a moment to spare, saving, of course, for rail leaning, which possibly forms part of the contract. But all this is changed when the sea presents a sufficiently calm face to arouse the confidence of the landsman.

From the longshore mariner's point of view, Providence created the visitor for one purpose only—that of having "a nice row," or "a pleasant sail." Therefore does the mariner stand upon the parade and put the same question in the same tone to the same people, until they yield themselves unto him. When this has been done, and the outside of them has again been set upon solid earth, another mariner addresses them, but the visitors go their ways to get new insides.

The Isle of Rügen.

A PENCIL SKETCH.

By DR. CÄSAR FLAISCHLEN.

All dreary, still,
 'Neath dull gray rain,
 Lies now the wood,
 And lonely plain.
 And dreary, still
 Drags wearily,
 Its waves to shore,
 The dull gray sea.
 While curlews scream,
 And wildly fly
 Round chalk cliffs tall,
 I can espy,
 Far, far away—
 By misty shroud
 Of distance veil'd—
 'Neath a dense cloud
 Of curling smoke,
 A steamer glide,
 As halcyon broods
 On tranquil tide—
 All dreary, still,
 'Neath dull gray rain.

[By special permission.]

TRANS. BY BARONESS SWIFT.

Cheated.

By OLIVER CREAGH.

"Ugo!"

"Well! did you think I was dead, and that you and your lover were safe?"

"Safe? To do what, in God's name?"

"Why, to go on living as you have been living for the last three years, perpetuating the only shame that has ever fallen on our house!"

The man and the woman had met suddenly, unexpectedly, in the village street: she had turned the corner on her way home from confession, and had almost run against her brother before she saw him.

"Ugo—where have you been all these years—three years since he—took me away?" She spoke with hesitation, breathing hard. The man broke in upon her words savagely.

"Ah! where do you think I have been? When you left Terrabianca with that reptile, you know I followed you as far as Pisa. Tell me, do you not know that?" His voice rose almost to a scream.

"I know," she said, shrinking from him. "And do you not know what happened then?" He was watching her keenly, as though about to spring upon her.

"Before God, I do not! He told me that he had seen you, and persuaded you that it was best to let us go our own way."

"He told you that, did he? And you—what right had you to believe him? Why, when I went to look for him, the morning after I reached Pisa, I met a priest, a burly giant of a fellow: he said his name was Fra Giacomo, and told me that you were married to your lover and had left the city the night before—just after I arrived. I demanded proofs of him, and he offered to show me the entry he had made in his register, since he himself had performed the ceremony at the Carmelite chapel. We set out together to walk to his house. On arriving there we found the door locked; and as he had no key it was impossible to get in. We went round to the

back of the house. 'We must try the back door,' said he, 'jump over the wall friend, into the garden.' I climbed over, and he followed close behind. The back door was open, and we went up to a little room looking out on the garden. I was so intent on finding out the truth, that it never struck me what a strange thing it was for a priest to live by himself in a house like that. He unlocked a chest, and took out a large book with heavy brass hinges and clasps. He opened it and turned over several leaves. 'Ah, here it is,' said he, 'read for yourself.' He brought the open book and placed it in front of me, standing behind my chair whilst I read. As I was bending over the page—you know I was never a ready reader—I heard something whirr through the air behind me, and the last thing I knew was that I had been struck. When I opened my eyes again I was in a small stone room, lying on some straw. There was a taste of wine in my mouth, and a nun was holding a cup to my lips, while another looked on and directed her. I asked where I was. They told me, in the hospital of the convent of the Carmelites. Where was Fra Giacomo? They did not know; my brother had brought me there insensible, in a fit induced, as he said, by madness, and begged them to keep me till I should be recovered."

"Your brother?" cried the woman incredulously.

"Yes, that was what they told me. I said I had no brother, and never had had one; that the only man I knew in Pisa was Fra Giacomo of the Carmelites, who had married my sister Carita to her lover, and then struck me senseless while I was looking at the record of her marriage in his register. The nun who was directing the other's actions said to her in a low tone (but I heard her) 'Poor soul! you hear? Well, there's no Fra Giacomo in this convent; and the man certainly said he was his brother.' I begged them to tell me all they knew, but they endeavoured to soothe me to rest: and at last, being still dizzy from the blow I had received, I either lost consciousness again or fell asleep. The next time I awoke, daylight was shining into the cell, and the sister who tended me was praying by the window. I waited while bead after bead dropped from her fingers; and when she arose from her knees I called to her. She turned quickly at the sound of my voice, and went to a shelf cut in the wall, and came to me with some restorative in a glass. I begged her of her charity to tell me what I

wanted to know ; and she, seeing me calmer, listened while I told her what had passed between me and Fra Giacomo. She told me that the man who brought me to them was not a priest at all, that he had said his brother had come to see him and had fallen into one of the fits that frequently attacked him since his brain had been hurt by a fall in his youth, and that when he came to himself he would know nothing of what had happened, 'and he prayed us of our charity,' she went on, 'to care for you until you were better ; for himself, he had to go to Ancona to purchase drugs, as he was an apothecary by profession.' I assured her quite gravely that the story was a lie from beginning to end ; that he had told me he had celebrated the rite of marriage between you and Luigi, and invited me to see the record of it : and that as I was beginning to read, he had struck me treacherously from behind, so that my loss of consciousness was due to a blow, and not to a fit or a fall in my childhood. She bade me lift my head, and there, sure enough, she found traces of a blow : 'but,' she said, 'you must have fallen that way when the fit took you.' I burst out, raging, that it was all lies, that I never fell at all, that it was a blow dealt me by a treacherous priest, who wished me not to follow my sister's seducer. She asked me what my sister's name was, and I told her, and also who was her lover. She started, but said nothing except that I was to rest again, and she would repeat what I said to the Mother Superior : and with this I was forced to be content, for no further appeal induced her to say anything more : in fact, soon afterwards a bell began to chime somewhere, and she went away. I could not sleep, and it seemed hours before she returned : but she brought with her the woman I had seen before, whom I now discovered to be the Mother Superior. She came up to me and said quietly, 'You say, Sister Ursula tells me, that you have no brother, and that the man who brought you here lied : and further, that you came to Pisa in search of your sister Carita and Luigi her lover : and therefore we feel bound to tell you that two strangers, calling each other by those names, claimed our hospitality three nights ago—the night before you were brought here. They were man and wife, so they said, but they departed early, and whither they went we know not.' I bounded up from my bed ; all the sickness in the world was nothing to me, I wanted to get out and find you. I begged the nuns to let me go, but they said that the convent doors

were shut, and none might go out until morning, according to their rule: but if I were fit to travel they would let me depart then. I implored them for God's sake and His mother's to let me go; but they would not hear. I pleaded, I threatened; it was useless. The infernal rule of the convent was the only thing for which they had any reverence, curse them!"

"Ugo! Ugo! hush! do not speak such words," cried his sister covering her face with her hands.

"Why not? why should I not curse them? I know now what I did not know then, that the one thing I was left alive for was my revenge; and every minute they kept me inside those walls hindered it. When they made to leave the cell, I jumped up and tried to follow; but that cursed Giacomo's hand had been too heavy. I fainted again and fell back on my straw, and knew no more for a while. It was still night when I awoke; but my head was clearer, and out of all the mist of pain and rage that had been upon me, one thought burnt itself in clearly on my soul, that I was to go out the next morning and find Luigi, and be revenged. I had no fear but that I should do it. When I thought of you as you had been, of our dead father, of our mother struck dead by the news of your flight, of our smirched name, of my own suffering and sorrow, I knew that death would not touch me till I had split the heart of that devil Luigi with my sword. And I went when the morning came. My plan was to find Giacomo, or rather Tito Cavoni (this I found to be his real name), and force him to tell me where you were gone. I went to his house and enquired for him; the old woman there told me he was gone away to buy drugs, she knew not where. At my request she shewed me his room; all was exactly as I had last seen it—the open window, the great book open on the table; the hound must have gone straight away from the convent without returning home. I looked at the book: it was open at the same place as when he had given it to me, for I recognised the illuminated capitals. But there was no record of your marriage there: nothing but foul recipes for his devil's mixtures! Then I first knew how thoroughly I had been cozened: I saw that Luigi had hired this scum to meet me, disguised as a priest, to tell me a fine tale of your marriage, and if possible to murder me. But thanks to the nuns, I knew where to look for Tito Cavoni: I reflected that my hands were good enough to kill him

with, so I sold my sword, and with the money in my pocket started for Ancona. I made my way to Rimini, and found a small boat starting from there, in which I took passage. We had gone but half way to Ancona, when silently, out of the night, came three boats, one meeting us and one on each side. They were manned by dark men, speaking an unknown tongue; my companions, screaming 'Pirates! Barbary devils!' flung themselves into the sea, where some were drowned, some murdered, and the rest captured. I too was captured and carried to a large ship, which immediately stood out to sea. I have been a slave among those fiends ever since, until a month ago; for three years I have borne what words cannot tell, of hunger, blows, torture, sickness, toil. But my revenge has always been before me; for that I have lived—the blows I felt not, save to remember to whom I owed them; the hunger of my body was as nothing to the hunger of my soul; torture—my torture was the delay that kept me from my pursuit; sickness gave me time to nurse my rage, and toil did but harden my body and increase my strength. And one day a number of newly-captured slaves came among us; amid all the faces I saw one, and one only; it was Fra Giacomo—Cavoni—and he did not recognise me. And that night, when we were all turned loose in the stinking pit where we slept, I told him who I was; and as I had promised myself, I fell upon him and killed him with my hands. But before he died he told me of Luigi's house in this village; and from that time I did what I could to rouse revolt among the others. After many days, thirteen poor wretches agreed to join me in an attempt at escape; and one night, a month ago, we broke upon our guards in the absence of their commander, and after a savage fight, we killed three of them, unarmed as we were; and four of us escaped. We got to the coast, and they did not pursue us. We wandered for twelve days by the sea, eating when we could and starving when we must. At last we reached Tripoli, and found a ship leaving for Italy; they took us as sailors and brought us to Naples. I have begged my way here in the hope of hearing of Luigi. and within an hour of my coming I have met you; so I know now I have waited long enough, and my revenge is near!"

During this recital the woman's eyes had alternately flashed and softened, and her breast heaved passionately, in triumph for her brother's endurance, and in pity for his suffering: and now, as he

ceased, and she saw his eyes burning into hers, while the utterance of his belief in his own power for vengeance rang in her ears, she said :

"Revenge? Yes, you shall have it, Ugo; and I will help you to it. But first hear why I offer you assistance. I fled with Luigi to Pisa, and, as I believed, was married to him there; for that same Fra Giacomo read a service over us in a little room such as you describe, after Luigi had showed me a paper which he said was an indulgence permitting us to be married thus privately."

"God!" screamed Ugo, "and you, Carita—of course you believed him?"

"What could I else?" she answered, "but hear the rest. We went to many places, to avoid your pursuit, as I was told; for he never failed to impress upon me that if you caught us we should be parted, perhaps killed, and that in spite of his having persuaded you to let us go our own way. And at last, about a year ago, we came here. I still believed in him and loved him, though I had begun to doubt his love for me. Since our arrival I have seen him but three times; I live alone with Filippa, who followed me from home and found me about six months after our—after I left our old house. Luigi came a week ago," she went on, her breath coming quicker, and her voice dropping to a lower, more deliberate tone, "and said he had much to say to me privately. It was this, that he was tired of me and meant to leave me, meaning really, as I found, that he wished me to leave him. I was horrified, and asked him how he could expect a wife to leave her husband; and he laughed in my face, telling me that he who married us was an old friend of his, and no more a priest than himself."

Ugo ground his teeth. "Ay," went on Carita, "remember that laugh, Ugo! I asked him if this was true, and he asked me if I supposed a man was going to marry every girl who ran after him. I was dumb with horror, and listened in silence to his promise to return in a week and tell me of the arrangements he would then have made for my comfort and sustenance. He is to be here to-night."

"To-night? Then God is with me at last! Tell me now, you that have promised to help me, how am I to meet him?"

"I am thinking of that. There will be supper three hours after sunset; he will surely arrive by then. And if you can be patient, you shall

remain in the great window behind the curtains until you have heard the whole of his treachery from his own lips; and then—do as you please. You need fear no interference from me.”

“Good! that will do! It is almost sunset now. Show me the house.”

All this time they had scarcely moved from the spot where they had first met. Now she took his hand, and led him in the direction in which she had been going when he met her. The sun was dropping, dull red and angry, and here and there glittered the steel point of a star. They walked in silence through the village, and about a quarter of a mile beyond the last house they turned to the left into a lane. A few hundred yards brought them to a high stone wall, moss-grown and weathered. Half way between its two extremities it suddenly curved upwards on each side of a great gateway; the upper stories of buildings within were visible above it. Carita opened a small wicket in the great gate, and motioned to her brother to enter. He did so, and she followed. They found themselves almost in darkness; for the sun was setting behind them, and the open land on the other side of the court to which the gateway led was already in deep shadow. But little by little Ugo saw that, on his left as he entered, the gateway was flanked by a wall pierced with loopholes some five feet apart, and about four feet above the ground. On his right was the wall, apparently, of a main building; for halfway along its surface appeared a door, and beyond this a winding stair. Carita however led him to the left, round the pierced wall, which he then found to be a mere screen, hiding the gate from the inhabited portion of the house; it had probably also in earlier times served some purpose of defence against undesirable visitors. Ugo pointed with a look of inquiry to the door in the opposite wall.

“It leads up to the armoury,” said Carita, “but come into the hall.” And she led him round to the left again, and in at a ruinous carved doorway. Here she stopped and called “Filippa!”

“Is it you, mistress?” replied a voice from the gloom of the interior.”

“Yes, I am here—I and my brother.”

Filippa, who had hurried forward at the sound of her mistress's voice, stopped suddenly and stood in the doorway staring, her jaw dropped, her eyes full of terror and incredulity.

"Mother of God!" was all she could say.

"There, there, Filippa, don't stare at me so. It is I—Ugo—myself—alive—yes, alive, and ready to do that which I am alive to do!"

"Give us lights in the hall," said Carita, "and see that all is ready against Luigi's arrival."

Still casting from time to time a frightened glance at Ugo, Filippa did as she was desired, and the brother and sister went into the hall, where a table was already laid for two persons.

"Ah," said Ugo, "can you give me food? I have had none since this morning; and I must not find my strength fail to-night."

"Surely," Carita replied, "surely, you shall have food. Filippa, bring what you have; only see that there be abundance left for supper."

Ugo accordingly sat down to the table, and ate what the maid brought; but sparingly, as being less intent on relieving the pain of a twelve hours' fast than on avoiding any lassitude that might arise from a too free indulgence. He emptied a flask of wine almost at a draught, however, and asked for another. It was brought to him, and while it was still at his lips, Carita seized his arm and said "Hush!"

He dropped the flask, and said "What is it?"

"I hear a horse coming," she said, "he must have come sooner than he intended! Quick, Ugo, go into the window—and Filippa, draw the curtain close!"

Ugo went to the end window of the three, the one opposite the door of the hall. The moon was just visible above the horizon. He curled himself up on the low window seat, and signed to Filippa to draw the curtains. Carita had already drawn those that hung by the other windows; and having seen her brother fairly ensconced in his hiding place, she left the hall, and stood in the doorway looking into the uncertain light of the courtyard, across which she presently saw Luigi advancing.

"Ah, is it you, Carita mia? I am earlier than I said, you see. But when the candle is once alight, 'tis never too early for the moth to be abroad."

He spoke with a reckless gaiety, that might have well become a lover of the less chivalrous type; but Carita's eager expectation of that evening's outcome was too tense for trifling, even if her vivid recollection of his last visit would have permitted it. She said,

watching eagerly for his answer. "Where is your horse?—and Stefano?"

"I have sent him down to the inn in the village. He will stop there to-night, and the horses too."

Carita turned away quickly that he might not see the relief in her face. She had feared that her brother might have two men to deal with. She led the way into the hall, and Luigi followed, his spurs jingling as he went. He cast his cap on a settle by the door; and noticed he was unarmed, and regretted it; for her trust in Ugo—which is another name for her own desire for vengeance—was such that she would not have been sorry had there been some trifling advantage on Luigi's side.

"Ah! Ah!" said Luigi, looking hungrily at the table, "that's good! a ten hours' ride puts a man in fettle for his supper. Bring it in, Filippa."

Filippa, concealing her agitation as she best might, brought in some soup and a great pasty of game, with two flasks of wine, and set them on the table. Luigi sat down and fell to, leaving Carita to look after herself. Presently he looked up and said "Filippa, for God's sake take that hollow-eyed death's head of yours into the kitchen! The sight of you would spoil the best appetite that ever came out of prison."

Carita's indignation boiled up to the surface, as Filippa tremblingly departed. "If you have come to do what you threatened——" she began.

"Come to do it? what else, do you suppose?" he interrupted.

"Then you should at least do it civilly."

"Civilly, eh! I think I have been too easy with you all these years. Many a man would not have troubled to do more than open the door and bid you begone."

Carita flushed hotly, more at the insolent contempt of his tone than at his words. A waver of the curtain behind which Ugo lay concealed warned her to lose no time if she would have Luigi betray himself adequately.

She said, "Well, we need not quarrel about manners, since you purpose to cast me off." Her tone was more quietly scornful than his. "You told me, you know, that the marriage at Pisa was no marriage, because the man was not a priest. How am I to know that?"

"You know it because I tell you so. He married me twice before in the same way. You don't suppose I'm a fool, do you? What good would there have been in my marrying you, after you had already given yourself to me? Now be sensible, and listen to reason. I am going to make a noble marriage—a real one this time: wealth, beauty, birth, position and all the things you have not got. And of course you must not stand in my way; listen therefore; choose where you would like to live, Pisa, Terrabianca, where you will, so that it be far enough from this; and I will send by a sure hand to a priest, a yearly sum of two hundred lire for your maintenance."

She rose in ill-concealed anger, and walked towards the window. "A beggar makes more than that," she said.

"Well!" he replied, "what if he does? He earns what he is worth, I suppose?"

She flashed round on him. "You swine's flesh!" she said. He was opening the second flask of wine and went on as though she had not spoken. "And besides, you can't tell; you may be able to earn a few lire in addition to what I send you—as you appear to have been doing just lately, *mia cara*; for I suppose neither you nor Filippa emptied those two wine flasks I see under the table, nor the dish which lies by them," pointing to the signs of Ugo's meal, which Filippa had hastily concealed beneath the table, when his horse's feet were first heard approaching.

As the full meaning of his words broke upon her, Carita sprang towards him, her eyes blazing. But another was before her. Ugo leapt from his hiding place and stood between Luigi and the door of the hall, panting, inarticulate with fury. Luigi was first to speak. "Ah," said he, "I did not know the man was here so opportunely when I spoke of him. I am sorry I arrived so inconveniently soon, Carita; it would have looked better had he had a chance to go before I came; but," turning to Ugo, "there is nothing to hinder you now."

By an effort, Ugo regained control of his speech. "I am going, Luigi, when I have killed you; not before."

At the first sound of Ugo's voice, Luigi started and fell back a step, his face pale, his eyes full of the puzzle of an imperfect reminiscence. Something in Ugo's aspect, rather than the words he uttered, drove the wedge of fear home to his bosom, and it was with a shaking voice he asked, "Who are you?"

"Who am I? I am Carita's brother Ugo: I am the man to meet whom you sent ~~you~~ lying Tito Cavoni. A fit tool he was for such a devil as ~~you~~! You have never seen him since, and you will never see him again. It was your turn, yours and his, when he half killed me while I listened to his lies about the 'reparation' you had made for stealing a love-sick girl from her home; my turn came later—first when I squeezed his life out with my bare hands in the slave-den of a Barbary sea-thief! and again—now!

Luigi had gone from pale to ashy-white when he heard the name of the man who glared so fiercely at him; his lips were dry and would not meet over his teeth. He dropped into a chair and hid his face in his hands. Ugo saw it, and turned to his sister.

"Look at him, Carita; that is the thing for which you have lost your young life and your beauty; for whose sake you gave our mother the knowledge that sent her to her death; that is the thing who, having brought all this about, now casts you out of his way like a crushed fruit! Listen, vermin!" he went on, suddenly leaping on Luigi and seizing him by the shoulder, "I told you I had been a slave and in prison through your lies and lust. Do you know what happens in those prisons? Do you know what starvation, blows, sickness or torture mean? Not you, you white rat! But do you know what has kept me alive through it all? This, and this alone; the certainty that God would bring me to you, and that I should make you pay for all. And now the hour of payment has come. Yet because my father once called your father friend, you shall kill me if you can. There shall be no treacherous dealing on my side: you have already put on our name all the dishonour it can bear. Therefore, come with me into the court; there is moonlight enough to kill me by."

Ugo spoke mockingly in part, but Carita, as she listened had no doubt of his determination. Luigi answered not a word: and after a moment's silence, Ugo shook him roughly; he looked up, first at Ugo, and then, seeing no relaxation in those fierce eyes, at Carita, and murmured "Spare me—I will go away——" Carita turned from him; and Ugo for answer struck him on the mouth, took him bodily in his arms, and rushed from the room. Carita followed, to find Filippa trembling in the dusk of the doorway; she took her by the hand, and they reached the door just in time to see Ugo

interrupt Luigi's prayers by flinging him in a heap on the ground, against the outer wall of the room they had just left.

As they came out of the shadow of the house, the two women together, they were clinging to one another, trembling, the one with fright, the other with expectation. They wasted no looks on Luigi, as he crouched, sick with the vilest fear, against the wall, his eyes full of dumb terror of that to which Ugo's fierce blow was only the prelude. All their attention was riveted on Ugo, whom they had seen, as they emerged from the door, disappearing round the end of the wall that screened the gateway.

"Where is he going?" said Filippa, whispering.

"We will go and see," replied her friend, taking her again by the hand, and leading her across the court.

The moon shone into the cavern of the gateway from behind them, and most of the space was in deep shadow. But just where the moonlight ended they could make out the doorway on the left, with its steps leading upwards. There was no need to ask if Ugo had gone thither. It could be no other whose passionate steps they heard stamping to and fro on the floor above; there were other sounds too, as of heavy weights violently moved; and then a resounding clash, as of a stand of weapons overturned.

"Merciful Mother! it is the armoury, up there where he is," said Filippa.

Carita clenched her hand on her friend's arm and drew her back out of the gateway. The steps were coming furiously down the stairs. Ugo appeared in the gateway, and rushed past without seeing them. He was carrying two swords.

They stepped inside the gateway again, and stood half concealed, yet able to see what the men were doing. Luigi lay back against the wall, just as they had last seen him: his eyes were still closed. Ugo ran forward, shouting to him to get up and choose one of the weapons and defend himself. There was no reply.

"Do you hear me, hound?" yelled Ugo, shifting round and round the cowering figure as though to find some avenue to its sense of hearing, "Hell is gaping for you! Rise, and face the last minutes of your worthless life with what spirit you may; and then, hence to your second death!"

But there was no reply. The man was motionless. Ugo pricked him with one of the swords, but he moved none the more for that.

Carita remembered that she had loved him once. She broke away from Filippa, and ran across the intervening space. "Ugo—Ugo," she stammered, "what are you doing? Forbear, for God's sake!"

"I will not forbear, Carita, until—God's curse! what is this?" Something seemed to strike him in the stubborn limpness of the figure before him. He stooped down, and caught Luigi by the arm. The man's body slipped along the wall, and lay extended, with ghastly staring eyes. He had died of his fear.

"Dead!" shrieked Ugo, "Christ! and my revenge——" He stopped: and then suddenly driving his sword into the dead body he cried "*Cowardly* carrion!" and burst into tears like a child that finds its toy broken.

Song.

I did not know, when Life was at its spring
 And each day dawn'd afire with joy untold,
 That Time would make more songs than I could sing,
 And show more stars than all my heaven could hold;
 Nor how men's hearts might waver to and fro
 In all life's loveliness—I did not know.

I did not know, when first with wondrous ray
 Love shone, and shook the landscape with his light,
 How bliss might grow from day to happier day,
 Till grief grew song, and every chance was right;
 Nor how man's love is strong to lay him low
 E'en as to raise him—ah, I did not know.

And now, when days of doubtful splendour shine,
 And nought is clear to me that Time may bring,
 Though with his wreath sad flowers of death should twine,
 Though dark should fall the shadow of his wing,
 And memory bid the tears of sorrow flow,
 My comfort shall be this—I did not know.

OLIVER CREAGH.

Her Daughter's Suitors.

A DUOLOGUE.

By EVELYN FLETCHER.

Author of "MONOLOGUES À LA MODE," etc., etc.

Characters.

CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS, ESQ.

MRS. SILLYBODDY.

Scene.—Drawing-Room in Mrs. SILLYBODDY's House.

Enter MRS. SILLYBODDY, with letters.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. This is really very extraordinary! Three letters, all marked "Private," and I don't know the handwriting of one of them—yet they're all as different as can be. Can some one—some *three*, I mean—have seen my daughter, and—oh, if so, I hope he's rich, and a foreigner. I've always said Trix must marry a foreigner; for, though I can't speak a word of the language myself, I love foreigners. They are so—so distingué. There, that's a foreign word, I know; but I disprunounce it. If only I could find my glasses—I know I had them at dinner; for Trix knocked them off the table by accident, and when I looked for them just now, they weren't there. Well, I must do the best I can without them. (*Opens first letter and reads.*) "Dear Mrs. Sillyboddy, I love your daughter, and will look in at eight sharp this evening to explain my position, which I hope will meet with your approval. Yours truly, Charles Middleklas." Now I call that a nice, manly, straightforward letter: a little short, perhaps, but if only the young man's prospects are such as to enable him to make suitable settlements, I might overlook the fact that he is not a foreigner. (*Opens second letter, and reads.*) "Madam, I propose to marry your daughter, and will call upon you at eight-ten this evening to conclude the bargain. I'm a plain man, but well able to afford luxuries, as my yearly

income (mostly derived from house-property situated in Spain, and other elevated regions) is never less than £20,000, and generally much more. I shall treat your daughter liberally in the matter of settlements. Truly yours, Jabez Cræsus Smith." Now I call that a very nice letter indeed—a little peremptory, perhaps, but plain—perfectly plain—like the man himself. Dear me, Trix is indeed a fortunate girl; though where in the world she can have met them all. She has never breathed a word of it to me, the little sly-boots. I wonder—(*Takes up third letter.*) What a magnificent seal! It's as big as the city arms, and twice as heavy. Scented paper, too. (*Reads.*) Madame Frau, si belle." (What does that mean, I wonder? My name isn't Sybil), "I adore your so charming daughter, and would lay myself—my noble ancestry, princely titles, and impoverished fortunes—at her most exquisite feet. I will do myself the honour to wait upon you at twenty minutes beyond eight this evening, till which most golden hour I continue to kiss your fair hands, Madame, and so rest your most devoted cavalier Paolo von Romanesque, Prince de Phibbs, Count of the Wholly Disintegrated Roman Empire, Chevalier St. Bughum." A foreigner, and evidently a most distinguished person. Where can Trix have met him? How delightfully he expresses himself, and how many titles he has! Really, amongst so many excellent proposals, the only difficulty is which to accept. (*Looks at her watch.*) One minute to eight. Oh, I must try and find my glasses before I receive my daughter's suitors, and see if Jane understands how to announce them properly. Three in one evening! Oh, the lucky girl! (*Going towards door.*)

Enter CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS, so abruptly that he nearly runs against her.

CHARLES (*stepping back.*) Oh, by Jove!

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside.*) This must be the first of them. Not at all a bad-looking young man either. Why doesn't he speak?

CHARLES (*aside.*) How on earth am I to begin? Trix said I was to be quite natural this time, but hanged if I know how to set about it. Here goes! (*Aloud.*) Good morning, Mrs. Sillyboddy. Hope you're well?

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Quite, I thank you (*Aside.*) Polite, too.

CHARLES. Delighted to make your acquaintance, you know. I've

heard so much of you from Trix. (*Aside.*) There, I flatter myself I'm bringing the conversation round in the right direction.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside.*) A little familiar, though. (*Aloud, sitting R.*) Pray be seated. You forget that I have not yet the pleasure of knowing—

CHARLES (*sitting L.*) Me? Just so. That can be put right in a minute. I'm Charles Middleklas. You got my letter? "Eight—sharp," you know.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Yes, and from it I gather that you wish to pay—

CHARLES. Eh?

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Your addresses to my daughter.

CHARLES (*aside.*) Hang it, I thought she meant my bills. (*Aloud.*) Exactly so. I'm afraid it's all I can afford to pay at present. Your—

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Mr. Middleklas: where did you meet my daughter?

CHARLES. Oh, all over the shop—

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Sir! Are you then in trade?

CHARLES. Place, I mean. At Monday Pops and friendly hops. We've quite a crowd of mutual acquaintances. The Browns, you know—

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Mr. Middleklas: spelt with an "e" of course?

CHARLES. Oh, of course. (*Aside.*) Hanged if I know. (*Aloud.*) And the Robinsons, and the Smiths.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*slightly.*) Yes, I am aware that my daughter just knows some people of the name of Smith. But (*glancing at her watch*) I have another appointment for ten minutes past eight, and—

CHARLES. You want to know all about me?

MRS. SILLYBODDY. I should like a few more particulars as to what you have to offer my daughter.

CHARLES. Right you are! In the first place, there's myself. You can see that I'm young, and not so bad-looking: so far, good. Moreover, I'm in something in the city. (It would take too long to explain what it is, in the three minutes you can still spare me, and, you probably wouldn't understand if I did); my salary may strike you as rather small—only fifty pound a year at present—but with the prospect of a rise, and—

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*rising*.) Sir, I cannot entertain your proposal for my daughter's hand.

CHARLES. Not good enough, eh? I grant you it doesn't sound much at present; but then I have the prospect of a rise—(*aside*) in eight or ten years at least.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Mr. Middleklas, I have here a proposal for Miss Sillyboddy's hand from a gentleman whose income is never less than twenty thousand pounds a year. You can read it for yourself. (*Holds second letter open before him.*)

CHARLES (*reads*.) "Jabez Cræsus-Smith."—Ah! one of the "people of that name" whom your daughter "just knows." (*Rising.*)

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*with dignity*.) Cræsus-Smith: it is a double name, Mr. Middleklas.

CHARLES. It always is now-a-days. It's one of the names that must be driven tandem to make any show at all. Do you know the old fellow?

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Old! Is Mr. Cræsus-Smith old?

CHARLES. Very: but he's well gilded. A self-made man, and such a mighty bad bit of workmanship that—But you'll be seeing him for yourself in another minute. Poor Trix.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. He is not Miss Sillyboddy's only suitor, see! (*Holds third letter open before him.*) Read the titles.

CHARLES. "Made in Germany," and warranted not to wear! I know him, and again I say—poor Trix!

MRS. SILLYBODDY. He's not a self-made man at any rate.

CHARLES. No; he's only one who has done his best himself to mar.—Well, I must be going. I shall always retain a most grateful recollection of your kindness. Give my love to Trix.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*indignantly*.) Indeed, I shall do nothing of the kind!

CHARLES (*laughing*.) Then do me the honour of keeping it yourself. Good evening.

Exit CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. What am I to think? He seems a plain-dealing, straightforward, young man, and he evidently knows both of these gentlemen well. But then they are his rivals, his *successful* rivals—at least one of them will be, for of course she can't marry both—and this may prejudice him against them. "Old," indeed! Everybody seems old to a boy like Mr. Middleklas. Probably, even

I myself! I daresay Mr. Cræsus-Smith is only about my own age after all, and I am just in the prime of life. Perhaps—I must try to find my glasses so as to be able to have a good look at the man, and—(*going towards the door.*)

Enter CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS as Cræsus-Smith.

He comes in hurriedly, almost running against her.

CHARLES. Beg pardon, mum. 'Ope I didn't 'urt you?

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*drawing back.*) No; oh, no! But—is it possible? Are you——"

CHARLES. Jabez Cræsus-Smith, mud-pie manufacturer and millionaire; yes, mum.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. And you are a suitor for my daughter's hand?

CHARLES (*sits R.*) Don't know about that. I mayn't *suit* 'er, you see! Ha, ha; that's my joke! Why don't you laugh?

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside.*) What a dreadful person! (*aloud.*) My daughter is very young, and——

CHARLES. So much the better: it's a fault I got over long ago.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*sits L.*) Yes; to tell the truth you strike me as rather old——

CHARLES. Yes: millionaires usually are.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Old for her, I mean, of course.

CHARLES. As it's "for her," she won't mind. If she 'as any doubt of that sort, my settlements will soon settle it.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Sir, do you take my daughter for——

CHARLES. A sensible girl, mum, and one that knows on which side her bread is buttered. No offence meant. I'm a plain man, and I don't care for show; you can tell that from my clothes.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. To tell the truth you look rather beggarly——

CHARLES. Yes; millionaires usually do.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. And this might—I don't say it would, but it might—prejudice my daughter against you.

CHARLES. More fool she, then. I shouldn't have——

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Mr. Cræsus-Smith: where did you meet my daughter?

CHARLES. In the 'Ampstead bus, and on the penny steam-boats.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. But, surely, with your means, you do not employ these inexpensive methods of locomotion?

CHARLES. Oh, don't I? It's just because of my means—on

account of 'em, as I may say—that I can afford to be mean. Meanness is one of my luxuries, and——

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Mr. Cræsus-Smith: of course you keep a carriage?

CHARLES. Yes, I keep one; but you don't suppose I let it out of the stable-yard except on 'ighdays and 'olidays? I can afford to 'ave luxuries, mum, but not to use 'em, and I'm not one to 'old with extravagance. You wouldn't wish me to bring your daughter to the work'ouse? I'm a prudent man.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside*.) You're a stingy one, and would break my poor child's heart in a week; but it does seem wicked to let twenty thousand pounds a year go out of the family—(*aloud*.) Then don't you think you should marry some one older, and——

CHARLES. No; I've no great opinion of old maids.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*laughing*.) Why, neither have I. But I was thinking of some lady in the prime of life; a lady of experience, who has been already married, let us say——

CHARLES. Eh?—Oh, is that your little game? No, thank you; much obliged, I'm sure; but it's your daughter I want to marry not you.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*rising*.) Sir!

CHARLES. My offer isn't transferable. Don't you think it.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. And how dare you insinuate—Oh, you are a very rude person.

CHARLES. I told you I was a plain man.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. And so you are—extremely plain. You are more; you are downright ugly! Oh, I couldn't think of condemning my poor dear Trix to sit opposite to you at dinner every day of her life. (*Recovering herself suddenly, and speaking with immense dignity*.) Sir, I cannot entertain your proposal for my daughter's hand.

CHARLES. Then I must see if she cannot entertain it herself. I'm not going to be put off by my mother-in-law—and you shall be my mother-in-law yet; I swear it, as sure as my name isn't Jabez Cræsus-Smith. I'll marry her. Oh, I'll marry her! (*Aside*.) I don't think the old lady will want Trix to marry a millionaire now.

Exit CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*sinks on to a chair*.) Oh, what a dreadful old man! How vulgar! How violent! Mr. Middleklas was right.

Trix, my child, what have I not borne for your sake? Oh, my little angel must marry a foreigner! I am more than ever resolved on that. Money, after all, is but a secondary consideration; nothing compared with high birth, and distinguished manners, and foreigners are always of noble birth—at least in this country. I expect it will be Prince Paolo after all. But that old Smith swore he would marry her in defiance of me, and he looked quite capable of doing it, too. He puts me all in a tremble; I'm only a weak woman, and—and——

Enter. CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS as *Paolo von Romanesque*.

CHARLES. Ach, the 'appy moment! Madame Frau, I 'asten to salute you. But—vat damage? Vat afflicts Madame, that the gracious Frau is all in tears? Ach, I am desolated indeed!

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside*.) What delightful manners! (*Aloud, rising*.) I believe I have the honour of addressing——

CHARLES. Ach, nein; mais non: the honour it is all to me; to me, Paolo von Romanesque, Prince de Phibbs, Count of the Wholly Disintegrated Roman Empire, Chevalier St. Bughum; à votre service, Signora. But I see you are vat you call "decomposed." Is it not so?

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside*.) Now who but a foreigner would ever have found that out? (*Aloud*.) I have been very much put out by a horrible old man who presumed to propose for my daughter's hand just now, and swears he will marry her whether I will or no.

CHARLES. Ach, vat would you? He is a brute, sans doute. They are all brutes, these English. And he would marry the so charming Trix?

MRS. SILLYBODDY. So he says: but you will prevent him, Prince.

CHARLES. Mais, certainement. I vill marry her myself. She is my Braut.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Your—I don't quite understand?

CHARLES. Braut—vat you call in English "fiancée": it is a vord "made in Germany." Be easy, chère Madame Frau; I vill marry her. (*Sits L.*)

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*sitting R.*) But—I must know a little more about you first.

CHARLES (*grandly*.) You know me—me, Paolo von Romanesque. Vat more would you? It is not for a Count of the Wholly Disintegrated Roman Empire, a Prince with sixteen hundred quarterings

in his shield, and the best blood of thousands of noble ancestors in his veins, to send himself out vat you call "on approval" to a leetle bourgeoisie Anglaise. It is not comme il faut—vat you call "allright." No, Madame Frau; if you were of my country, you would not ask it. It is a bêtise, a gaucherie, a solicism.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Oh, I beg your pardon, I'm sure! And what is your country, Prince?

CHARLES. The mighty continent, Madame; the great abroad.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. And you are a suitor for my daughter's hand?

CHARLES. I would make her the Princess Paolo: I place myself and all my titles at her foot.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Prince; you are of a very noble family?

CHARLES (*modestly*.) I am wohl-geboren, Frau; vat you call "igh-bred." One of mein ancestors was in the ark vith Vater Noah when the great flood—vat you call "deluge"—came. Ach, but for that ark there would 'ave been none of mein family left.

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*sympathetically*.) And have you many relatives living now?

CHARLES. None, Frau Madame. I am like your England—vat you call "isolated"—so I seek to ally myself with your daughter.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One moment, Prince: where did you meet my daughter?

CHARLES. In the Earthly Paradise, Signora—or so it seemed to me: one of the enchanted places where you are invited in all the veathers to spend "a 'appy day." But I did not spend it. Your so lovely daughter gave it to me.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. One word, dear Prince; you are, of course, prepared to make liberal settlements?

CHARLES. Settlement? Ya, wohl. I am prepare to settle on the Fraulein Sillyboddy mein heart, mein name, mein titles, mein sixteen hundred quarterings, mein noble ancestors, *all*! Ach, vat more would you? It is mein vife will be the 'appy Frau.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Very likely; but she can't live on these things. The old gentleman whose proposal I rejected has twenty thousand pounds a year, but I do not think you have mentioned the amount of your yearly income?

CHARLES. Ach, mein; it is noting. So! I am not of the nation of shopkeepers who tink always of £ s. d. I live on mein reputation, mein ancestors, and so vill mein vife.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Nonsense, Prince. My daughter isn't a cannibal; and she is accustomed to all the luxuries money can buy.

CHARLES. So? I will resign myself. You can buy her the luxuries with your money, and I will share them with her. I will not oppose. I 'ave vat you call "magnanimity."

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*rising*.) Prince, I cannot accept your proposal for my daughter's hand.

CHARLES (*rising*.) Vat? You refuse me—*me*, Paolo von Romanesque? You, a mere bourgeoisie Anglaise, refuse a Count of the Wholly Disintegrated Roman Empire? Voman, miserable and imbecile! Your daughter shall ved none but me, or I will run her Brautigam through on the vedding-day—I vill, I swear it on mein sword! (*Raging up and down the room.*)

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*aside*.) Oh, the man is mad! (*Aloud.*) Go away, or I shall send—

CHARLES. Send? Ach, yes! Send for your nearest male relative, or besser still, for the man that you would 'ave her ved—that I may slay him, and avenge mein vounded honour. Refuse *me*! The insult must be vashed out in blood, and it is mein sword that vill mangle him.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Oh, go away! Go away, or I shall scream!

CHARLES. Ach, vill you? Then I go. But I leave with you the last vord of your English Charles when they cut off 'is 'ead—"Remember!" (*Aside.*) That's done it. I don't think she'll want Trix to marry a foreigner *now*!

Exit CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Oh dear! Three proposals refused in one evening! Oh, Trix will never get a husband at this rate. Mr. Middleklas was right. That young man has a great deal of sense, and if only he were in a somewhat better position with regard to settlements—but fifty pounds a year is too little to marry upon—why, it would hardly keep Trix in hats and hairpins. I wish—

Enter CHARLES MIDDLEKLASS.

CHARLES. I beg your pardon, but could you spare me another two minutes, Mrs. Sillyboddy?

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*graciously*). Certainly. You have something more to say?

CHARLES. I have; that is, if I am not too late. Your daughter—

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Is still disengaged, Mr. Middleklas. You were right. Those gentlemen were not worthy of her.

CHARLES. I was sure of it. It struck me that perhaps you hardly realised the full force of what I told you with regard to my position. True, I have only fifty pounds a year *now*; but with the prospect of a rise, Mrs. Sillyboddy, with the prospect of a rise.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. I quite understand that, but——

CHARLES. You did—and you still think——

MRS. SILLYBODDY. That I have no alternative but to refuse your proposal for my daughter's hand.

CHARLES. Oh, this is crushing! But I hadn't time to mention I've a little private fortune as well—in Consols—that brings me in about five hundred pounds a year.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. My dear Charles, that alters the matter entirely. I need hesitate no longer. You have my permission to speak to my child at once.

CHARLES. Oh, thanks. I'll——(*Going to the door.*)

MRS. SILLYBODDY (*tragically.*) One moment, Charles! A horrible recollection has flashed across my mind. I ought to warn you that there may be difficulties, you may find lions in the path. Mr. Smith has sworn to marry my daughter despite me, and the prince has sworn to murder and mangle the man she marries. He looked quite capable of doing it too!

CHARLES. Is that all? That for their threats! (*Snapping his fingers.*) I'm a match for them both.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. You are not afraid? You are a hero! Then we will go together to find my daughter.

CHARLES (*aside.*) I'd rather go alone. (*Aloud.*) Let me call her.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. But you don't know where she is.

CHARLES. Oh, don't I—(*Aside.*) And your glasses, too.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. Dear boy, you are so excited. You hardly know what you are saying. How you must love my child!

CHARLES. For her sake I've been—like Cerberus—"three gentlemen at once," and I must go and tell her you've accepted all her suitors.

MRS. SILLYBODDY. But she won't know what to make of you?

CHARLES. Oh, won't she? Come along and see.

Exeunt CHARLES MIDDLEKLAS and MRS. SILLYBODDY.

A Song of Sicily.

Cold is that heart in very deed
That thrills not to the Dorian reed,
That loves not still fair Henna's mead,
The valleys of Theocritus.

The Chian and the Teian muse
Yield to the Fount of Arethuse,
Nor matches Petrarch's own Vacluse,
The valleys of Theocritus.

Methinks, entranced in waking dream,
I see the monster Polypheme,
Quitting, to seek the ocean stream,
The valleys of Theocritus.

And Galatea mocks him still ;
Is coy, and yields not to his will ;
For Acis waits, where charms a rill,
The valleys of Theocritus.

Cactus and myrtle, prickly pear
And oleanders pink are there ;
The palm still decks, and arums fair,
The valleys of Theocritus.

A golden mist spreads o'er the sea,
Wrought by Morgana's witchery ;
Soft silver vests in mystery
The valleys of Theocritus.

Oh, land of terror and delight,
Where Etna's flames illumine the night,
Where smile, with lilies richly dight,
The valleys of Theocritus.

Palermo and the Golden Shell !
Greece, Rome, and Carthage loved you well ;
Give me, ye gods, wherein to dwell,
The valleys of Theocritus. W. B. WALLACE.

Some Features of the Magazines of To-day.

By Mrs. STUART-LANGFORD.

II.

THE "TELL ME YOUR TROUBLE" COLUMN.

TIME was when Editors stowed the Agony Column in a modest corner of their daily papers, side by side with such unsensational notices as *Wanted*, a Cook ; or *Lost*, a Poodle.

Busy men and women passed it by entirely, and were scarcely conscious of its existence ; and its influence upon the great reading public was *nil*.

But all that is changed now-a-days. We have no longer any need to suffer in a corner. Advice gratis to all who are in trouble, and especially to young lovers, is set forth boldly on the top headings in the centre pages of magazines, so that he who runs may read, and the number of sorrow-stricken folk, young and old, and of both sexes, who take advantage of these magnanimous offers is amazing.

We used, in olden times, to get Advice Gratis from our fathers and mothers. We were not always pleased to get it ; we did not invariably listen to it with meekly bowed heads, and hands folded passively upon our knees ; we very seldom had the grace to thank our parents for it ; but all the same, we *had* to take it and to digest it as submissively as we did the salts and senna of early childhood.

Not so, however, is it with the young lovers of to-day, who fill the middle pages of our modern periodicals with their sad complaints and their pitiful pleadings for advice. The very pseudonyms under which they write reveal the terrible depths of their afflictions. *Distressed, Heartbroken, Trodden Down, Distracted, Devastated* ; these are a few of the names in present favour.

Good old-fashioned parental counsel is plainly quite insufficient to cope with these advanced maladies of the heart. The supply, which in our young days seemed entirely disproportionate to the demand, is disproportionate still, but in an inverse ratio—and lovers would be

in a sad plight if it were not for those generous men and women who, impelled doubtless by the most laudable motives, have set up the standard of the Love and Courtship Columns. Great-hearted, ardent philanthropists they must be, who spread out their hands all day long, and never grow tired of entreating correspondents to believe that they are not, will not, *cannot* be bored by long letters, detailing the individual woes of such of their young brethren and sisters as are

"Weeping in the playtime of the others
In the country of the free."

Turning from the Advice Giver to the Advice Seeker, one is struck by the harrowing details which are brought to light through these "Tell me your Trouble" Columns.

"I wonder if you will help me in my trouble?"

writes a distressed fair one.

This sounds so plaintive and artless, that we are lured on, in spite of ourselves, to discover what the *trouble* may be, knowing, of course, that it has to do with her lover.

"He is very particular about dress."

she says, presently.

"But my trouble comes in this way: He always has one stocking down, and, as he usually wears knickers, it makes him look very silly. I believe he is not aware of it, and what I wish to know is if I may give him a hint about it. His name is Claude, and I am really fond of him; but my friends tease me so unmercifully about his stocking, I am getting to dislike being seen with him, and he seems surprised and hurt when I refuse to go out with him."

This is surely a model case for the public print! We are gratified to find that the Adviser takes a delightfully sympathetic view of the matter, and suggests that the troubled one should *borrow a Kodak*, and surreptitiously photograph the legs of the unhappy Claude, *at their worst*, and so horrify that young man with a sight of his pictured untidiness that he shall offend her eyes no more.

Poor Troubled One! Poor Claude! How could you have carried on your courtship without the aid of this public Adviser?

Troubled One's mother or married sister would never have been capable of the inspiration of the Kodak. They might even have counselled her to the terrible misdemeanour of speaking to Claude in plain downright English about his stocking!

But now, everything is charmingly easy. Troubled One has only to decide which of all her gentleman friends owns the best Kodak—we personally recommend the five guinea one—and she will then approach this favoured friend, diffidently, and beg a few photographic lessons from him; the borrowing of the Kodak will come to him very naturally after that. When at last the photograph of the stocking has been successfully taken—we are all well aware of the slight delays incidental to amateur photography—the Favoured Friend will gladly assist Troubled One in the development, printing, and mounting of the picture and—there you are! What could have been more simple?

But—this is really distracting; we thought we had done with Claude. We were on the point of saying good-bye to him and to Troubled One for all time, when an inspiration seized *us*; one, however, that is destined to supplement—not to supplant that of the Adviser. Dear Troubled One, you must *buy* a Kodak; there is no other permanent way out of your difficulties. Strap it to your bicycle when you ride out with Claude, and hide it under the draperies of the Cosy Corner in your drawing-room when you are at home. It will then be ready for all future emergencies, and your peace will be assured. We refer you, for cost and full particulars, to the Advertisement Columns—this is not one.

Having thus cleared our conscience, we feel free to give a little attention to *Devastated*, *Trodden Down*, and *Heartbroken*—sisters in calamity.

Trodden Down's sweetheart treats her abominably. He said six months ago that he loved her dearly, and now he has been seen talking to another young lady. Clearly, nothing remained for *Trodden Down* but to write to the paper about it. We hope that perfidious young man will be ashamed, now that he finds himself held up to public contempt.

Devastated, aged forty-six, seeks kindly counsel with regard to her lover, aged twenty-one. We are shy of intruding an opinion, having never been called to the office of Adviser; but we think it should be put honestly to *Devastated*, that, provided neither she nor the young man die of vexation in the interval, there will come a day when she will be seventy, and he forty-five. It is well to have something cheerful to look forward to.

These slight incompatibilities of age have been a source of distress

in all times. We never grow out of them. The case of Devastated suggests a brief diversion.

Some years ago, when travelling through the Midlands, a talkative fellow-passenger drew our attention to a remarkably fine house which stood in its grounds at a short distance from the line.

"See that place?" said he.

Our answer was obvious.

"Well," he resumed, "I know the mistress of that house. She's quite a young thing yet. She married the owner of that place for his money—didn't care a straw for *him*. But he was seventy then, and she thought he'd be sure not to last long. They have been married now just over twenty years; and the old man has wonderfully good health yet."

We felt our eyes twinkle, and were conscious of not being in entire sympathy with that long-suffering wife.

Heartbroken has, as one would expect, a touching tale to tell. The man to whom she is engaged does not give her so many presents as his income would warrant. She is "terribly distressed" by this negative treatment, and is coming to the conclusion that he does not love her so much as some men love their sweethearts. She then confesses, with much artlessness, that she has had another offer from one whom she might learn to love, and entreats to be advised with all speed, whether she may profitably cancel her first engagement, and try the new man *for a time*.

This, again, is a case that appeals to the general public as much as Claude's.

Why shouldn't *Heartbroken* try the new suitor *for a time*?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, that great woman who wrote so grandly about love, and lived up to her ideal, was pleased to say of this type of affection:

"Such love's a cowslip ball to fling—

A moment's pretty pastime."

But if *Heartbroken* finds solace in playing cowslip-ball in the public fields set apart for that delightful recreation, who shall hinder her?

Examples multiply themselves upon us. We are afraid to open another magazine. We have several more *Columns* to treat of yet, and would like to survive the strain. We must therefore decline to take any more troubles to heart at present.

But, English girls, you who drag your incidental perplexities through the pages of periodical literature, are you "all heart," like the honourable Mrs. Skewton, whom Dickens made famous; and have you no backbone?

You have to look forward, ninety per cent. of you, not to the trifling necessity of hinting to Claude, by look or gesture, that he should pull up his stocking, but to the actual everyday duty of keeping Claude in order from his top shirt-button to his shoe-tie; and it will be yours to ensure that when he does pull up his stocking, there shall be no unseemly revelation of a hole at the heel.

We are sorry to impose this commonplace statement upon you; but you will find, sooner or later, that life—even life with Claude—is made up of commonplaces. Yet there is still some kindness in our candour; and, seeing that we shall never more aspire to the office of Public Adviser, we would, in parting, remind you of that true talisman which can render the most commonplace life joyous and beautiful.

It is the

"Love that loves to the level of every day's most quiet need."

If Troubled One and Claude possess that, they may, after all, be able to get through life cheerily, without even borrowing a Kodak, or making use of a "Tell me your trouble" column.

Lady-Gardeners.

By DARLEY DALE.

"Men, some to business, some to pleasure take;
But every woman is at heart a *rake*."

ONE of the most pleasant of modern occupations for woman is that of nursery gardening. Health, and a fair modicum of physical strength are indispensable to this career. Really delicate women are obviously unfit for a life that necessitates a great deal of standing, exposure to all weathers, and some hard work; though most lady-gardeners neither do the actual digging and preparation of the ground themselves, nor allow their pupils to do so.

For those who are fairly strong, and have no delicate tendency, it is a most healthy life; while for a *malade imaginaire*, it would often be a certain cure. It is a healthy life, morally as well as physically, for it involves some self-sacrifice, and that of a kind which is not easy to all women to make.

To begin with the beginning of the day, a lady-gardener must be an early riser; no breakfast in bed, no morning wrappers can be indulged in, but an early cup of tea before going into the garden is necessary. Early rising, though it is one of those virtues which, as the French so happily say, "have the defects of their qualities," has its compensations; for the morning is the king of the day; and the breaking of dawn, the strengthening light, the morning mists, the glorious tints of sunrise, the sparkling dewdrops brilliant as diamonds, to say nothing of that wonderful, mysterious beauty of light and shade which only the very early morning yields, are well worth getting up to see.

But there are other little sacrifices that touch the feminine nature more closely, which a lady-gardener has to make. She cannot have very white, delicate hands; potting, planting, sowing, weeding, taking cuttings, all spoil the hands, for it is not possible always to use gloves, and even then the hands get stained.

Neither can a lady-gardener take care of her complexion; she must be out of doors a greater part of the day; she must be exposed to the east winds of spring, the hot sunshine of summer, the gales of autumn, and all the freaks of an English climate. But if it can no longer be said of her,

"There is a garden in her face.
Where roses and white lilies grow."

If the delicate pink and white are lost, she gains a ruddy-brown, which speaks of glorious health.

And during her working hours she must eschew thin shoes and flimsy gowns, as she would all evil; thick, strong leather boots, and a good, stout serge skirt are absolutely necessary.

The typical lady-gardener is generally a very bright, happy, cheerful woman; the freedom of her life, and the exhilarating effect of being so much in the open air, probably contribute to this. She is generally an intellectual woman of wide sympathies; she does not despise other callings with the cheap flippancy of the literary woman, or the narrow-minded jealousy of the musician.

The sacrifices she has to make to feminine vanity, the habits of trained observation she is forced to cultivate, the tender interest and affection she feels for her plants, her care of the delicate, her patience in nursing her sick plants or young seedlings, her watchfulness against insect pests and all the other enemies of plant life, all this tends to widen her sympathies. Some of the best qualities of the feminine nature are thus exercised quite unconsciously daily, and the result is a thoroughly womanly woman who has gained some masculine advantages without losing any of the tenderer qualities of womanhood.

Great attention to detail, which is a feminine attribute, is very necessary to a successful gardener; she must detect the "envious worm in the bud" before he has time to work his wicked will, and no ladybird is so deadly to the green-fly as the lady-gardener.

Sometimes she opens a flower-shop for the sale of her plants and flowers, her fruit and vegetables: so she requires capital and business capacity, for in this as in other trades, three years must elapse before it begins to pay.

The sale of seedlings and young plants from her nurseries is one of the most profitable branches of this calling; but there are several ways of supplementing these gains.

The making of crosses, wreaths, crowns, harps, and lyres with broken strings, and all the other magnificent floral trophies now considered an appropriate offering to a sinful soul on its way to judgment, is an important and very lucrative part of her work, and she never has any difficulty in finding a pupil to undertake it. The making up of button-holes and bouquets for weddings and balls to order, perhaps from a great distance, is another feature of her work.

In some towns a good trade is done in decorating dinner tables; in the country this is more often done by the head gardener from his own houses or garden, but in London and other towns a lady-gardener will supply the flowers, and either go herself, or, if she has no taste for it, send a capable apprentice to arrange them on the dinner or supper table; and any novel design or idea is greatly appreciated. Sometimes it will cost some hours of anxious thought to find some quite new design.

It will be seen that the career of a lady-gardener has plenty of variety, and offers scope for the exercise, not only of taste but of the intellectual powers also.

No fools need apply here.

There is much to be learnt; out of ten new pupils, a lady-gardener does not expect to find more than one who knows how to pot a plant, and not one who can take a cutting; and besides all such technical knowledge, there is much to be learnt about the fertilization of plants, the various means of propagating different plants, the diseases to which they are subject, and the remedies to be applied.

A knowledge of botany is required, for a lady-gardener should be a botanist as well as a florist, and as a rule gives lectures on botany to her pupils. If a shop is kept, a knowledge of book-keeping is absolutely necessary, and the lady-gardener then devotes an hour a day to giving her pupils lessons in this.

The apprenticeship lasts two and sometimes three years; the pupils never work more than eight hours a day, and of these eight, six are given to actual gardening, and two to study. The pupils may or may not be required to help in the shop; as a rule, they have nothing to do with it during their apprenticeship, beyond cutting the flowers, or, if a kitchen garden is kept, gathering the fruit and vegetables to send to it. Far more profit is made from the sale of flowers in winter than in summer, as they fetch a much higher price then, being grown under glass. Greenhouses and hot-houses are a necessary part of the plant, and working under glass is to some people more trying than working in the open air.

It will be seen that the lady-gardener's life is not exactly a bed of roses, or at least there are thorns with the roses; it has its drawbacks as much as its advantages, but it *is* life, and not mere existence; and though it has its trials, it also has its joys and prizes.

Two Sketches.

By ARTHUR G. OWEN.

I.—AN ALTERED OPINION.

THERE were three of us. We were, and we always had been, close friends. To begin with, our circumstances were precisely identical; we were all orphans, we had, all of us, a little a year, and lastly, we were pretty much of an age. We had been chums from the early Girton days; and during the whole time we spent at college I do not think we ever quarrelled. This, viewed in the light of my later experiences of woman's friendships is nothing more than a marvel.

Yet it was so. We consulted each other in everything, and not one of us ever decided on anything—a dress or a new hat—without first submitting it to the trio, and obtaining a unanimous verdict. And when the time came for us to leave Girton, and to say good-bye to our college mates, never a thought of parting occurred to us. Quite naturally, and quite instinctively, we looked forward to the future together—the three of us.

Well, after a little time spent in visiting a few distant relations, we gathered together again under one roof—our own roof—our joint home. It was a beautiful cottage on the banks of the dear old Thames. Had we searched the world over, we could not have made a better choice. A soft, green lawn stretched from the porch to the water's edge, upon which we could play lawn tennis or croquet to our hearts' content. We had a beautiful flower garden; and Louise, who is a rare gardener, took over its management. The house itself was roomy, yet snug; and, oh! the delight of furnishing it. Well, only a woman, I suppose, can understand *that*.

Really, I must give Annie the credit, though. It was she who planned everything out so neatly, she who bargained so well, she who did everything so economically, and she who had the taste and knack. Annie was the eldest (by a month), and the most sedate. Dear Annie!

But we were seldom indoors. We plumed ourselves upon lacking the effeminate manners which go to make women unenterprising and unoriginal. Girton had done much for us in this way. We had our

little boat upon the river, and we almost lived upon the water in the summer. Louise used to row us about with that long stroke of hers; I used to steer, and Annie would read to us or give us a lecture on the failings of man and the error of his title of Lord of Creation. We often, too, planned sketching excursions, and there were many subjects for our pencil in our neighbourhood. Louise couldn't draw, so she bought a camera, and produced several wretched photographs. She soon gave it up and took to making jokes instead. Louise was always a very funny girl.

So you see we were happy. We looked forward to nothing better than to be always thus, and nothing could have been a greater calamity than a separation.

I think I have hinted that Annie had decided opinions about the opposite sex. She was, indeed, a man-hater. We were all man-haters. No, I will not have it said we were new women. We did not forget our womanliness when we denied the superiority in the other sex. For us, at any rate, the question was settled; the male creature did not come within our scope of reckoning. Spinsters we would remain all the days of our lives. We would not suffer ourselves to become the domestic treasure of Mr. So-and-so, or to spend a life of sock-darning or general utility. It was a degradation, Annie said, and nothing was so unjust, so abhorrent, so undignified, as the position of the Englishman's wife.

This was Annie's pet theme, and she had long ago convinced us she was right. As I recall it now, it seems so strange. How many times people change their ideas in a lifetime!

Every year, in the autumn, we took a holiday. It was hardly a holiday; we were always glad to get back again, and counted the days when we were separated. But we all had relations, and we all had to pay these relations an annual visit. It was a bore, but we did it. On one of these holidays—it was the third year we had lived together—I was staying with an old great-aunt, and whilst I was there, living a most monotonous life with the dear old lady whom I never saw until mid-day, and who disappeared again shortly after tea, we were joined by a young man, a relation of my great-aunt's, and also a connection of my own. He was fresh from Oxford, and was already qualifying for the Bar.

Well, what was one to do? The place was absolutely insupportable alone, and he was excellent company; Louise herself could not have

been better. We inevitably became constant companions. In boating, in fishing, in everything, he was always with me.

I always wonder how it was that I, always so frank about my adventures with men, never once in my letters to my friends, mentioned that my Cousin Jack was staying in the same house as myself. I was, to say truth, enjoying myself very much more than I usually did on my holidays, very much more than I should have liked, at that time, to confess. It would be absurd to deny that the cause of this was Jack, and—well—to make a long story short, I must tell you that I had a great surprise in store for Annie and Louise, when the time came for me to return to our riverside cottage.

As the train carried me nearer and nearer my journey's end, I felt more gloomy and perplexed. How could I break it to them? I felt I was about to undergo a terrible ordeal which would require all my courage and fortitude. At length I reached my station, and the dear girls, who had arrived by an earlier train, were there to meet me. I was really glad to see them again, and they to see me, and for the first half-hour I forgot all about my cares. But as I remembered them, the difficulty of the thing came back to me. To add to my woe, I could not help observing that both Annie and Louie did not seem as cheerful as usual. Perhaps this was imagination, but it troubled me considerably, and I decided to postpone my ordeal till to-morrow. It was weak of me, I know, but you cannot understand what a great thing I had to do.

We had always condemned marriage in the strongest terms as a bond and slavery. And how was I to tell them, Annie especially, that I was going to be married? At one time I almost decided to break off with Jack, to write and tell him I really couldn't; but again an idea occurred to me: I resolved to be diplomatic. This was my plan, I would sound Louise, and try and persuade her first, and we would take Annie by storm together. Yes, that was the best way! Accordingly I crept into Louise's room after we had all gone to bed. I found her sitting in an armchair meditating. I wondered at this, for Louise is not of a meditating turn. However, I went straight to my business. I told her everything, and how I wanted her to help me out of it with Annie. She burst out laughing. Louise sees a joke in everything, but I failed to see one in this matter, and, moreover, I told her so.

"Why, dear," she said, when she was able speak, "what a strange coincidence!"

"What is a strange coincidence?" I asked, wonderingly.

"I am in the same predicament as yourself. I, too, am engaged." And this time we both laughed; it seemed so funny.

I felt more confidence now. I had, at anyrate a companion in distress, and we were two to one. She told me her story, which proved to be very similar to my own, and how she had dreaded telling us about it, just as I had done, how most of anything she had dreaded Annie about it—Annie! Yes, there was still Annie to face! Poor Annie! what would she do now?—she who had done so much for us. It was too, too bad!

We decided to tell her all about it in the morning, and I departed to my own room and to sleep. I did not sleep well, however; perhaps it was the first time I had not done so. I was continually awakening in the middle of a dream—sometimes a pleasant one, sometimes a melancholy one.

The morning came; how relentless of it! with it the ordeal. At breakfast, Annie was decidedly grave, and Louise, who I have never suspected of having very much courage, implored me by looks not to broach the subject at that time. I felt that hesitation meant fall, but I could not help it. I did not broach the subject. It was not my weakness, it was consideration for Louise.

Breakfast seemed eternal. For the first time in our lives, I think, there was silence amongst us. Three women together and silence! It was awful. Could Annie have heard of our affair, or could she have divined it? At any rate, try as we would, we could not get anything out of her but monosyllables. For a second time I almost determined to treat the thing as impossible, and to break with Jack. Louise told me long after, when we were talking it all over, that the same thought crossed her brain. So you see how real our trouble was. Well, breakfast at last came to an end, and we had taken out some magazines to read on the lawn. Annie and I were lolling in basket chairs, and Louise was stretching herself in the hammock. The same guilty stillness seemed to surround us, when suddenly it was broken by Annie.

"Girls," she exclaimed, in so funny a voice, that it made Louise start up, and nearly fall upon us from the hammock; "you know how I have always run men down, and called them contemptible creatures, and said we women were too good for them, and that marriage was an uneven bargain?"

"Yes," said we, in a breath.

"Well, I want to tell you that I have changed my ideas about all that." And Annie looked at us closely, and we could plainly see that she was astonished we uttered no indignant and hostile words. After a moment she added, "I am going to be married."

Louise was the first to recover. She burst out laughing, and I followed suit. Annie was aghast. She had expected a very different reception, and was wholly at a loss to understand the cause of our merriment.

At length we told the poor dear everything, and then she laughed too. It was really a good joke; and you may depend upon it that we made up during the remainder of the day for the silence and melancholy of the morning.

II.—A RUSE.

SHE was American, and pretty. She had all the alert expression common to her country-women, without the perkiness and self-assurance which usually accompany it, and she has lost, or perhaps had never acquired, those eccentricities of manner and speech, known in England as Americanisms. She had come over to England on the death of her father and mother, and had taken up her abode in the household of an uncle who had a country living in the north.

Hitherto, this household had consisted of the good man himself, and the necessary retainers, he saw few strange faces, and he rarely went beyond the boundaries of his own parish. But this state of things did not appal Miss Hero Daverell. From the whirl of gaiety and pleasure of a lady of society in a gigantic New England city, to the peace and repose of an isolated rural parsonage, was, in truth, a sudden, but, to her, a welcome change. She loved the dear old garden; she loved the dear old English scenery, she loved her dear, slow, old uncle, his dogs, and his old grey mare; and she was in love with all her surroundings and as happy as everybody she smiled upon.

It was a glorious summer day, and Hero was lying luxuriously in a hammock, suspended in the shade of a splendid oak. She was half-asleep, and the book she had been reading, had fallen to the ground. Suddenly, the click of the gate roused her, and she glanced

in its direction. "Mercy!" she murmured in her bewilderment, "what on earth is this?" What indeed! It was a memorable sight. Four young men were filing up the garden path towards the house. They were all obviously the product of English public schools; tall, athletic, with regular features, and cheery laughing expression—except one—a little delicate-looking fellow, hardly more than a boy, or rather a girl, for his face was more in the nature of things feminine than masculine.

Exactly why these four men has chosen this man-forsaken spot for a few months' holiday and rest, I cannot say, unless for that very absurd reason that it was admirably calculated to afford them the desired rest. Now-a-days, a holiday usually means a period of greater exertion and fag than usual. It had happened all in a moment. They were sitting, at any rate three of them, in Smiths' chambers. Conversation had flagged. Smith yawned and said, "Do you know, I'm done up."

"So am I," drawled Saunders.

"And so am I," said O'Brady.

"Look here," exclaimed Smith, after a woeful five minutes had elapsed. We all want a long rest. Those law courts are stifling these summer days, arn't they, O'Brady? And you, Saunders, leave your paints and brushes and rubbish; stop daubing maidens at wells and so forth, and let us all go off to some dead old place and forget all about this horrible, grimy, murky town.

The others had not suspected Smith capable of anything so poetic as this, and his eloquence inspired them. London had never seemed so dull and miserable. They already felt the strong, country air, laden with the scent of flowers, about them. It was quickly agreed upon, and they dispersed, feeling new hope at their hearts. Before they left the room, O'Brady said:

"By the way, shall we take Dolly?"

"Dolly!" exclaimed the other two.

"Yes; you know he is really good company, and can always put us right when we are in the blues. Seems to me he is just the man for a job like this. He'll keep us alive, you know."

"Good idea that," said Smith; "yes, by all means let us take poor little dolly."

What was it, this Dolly? Just that little, delicate man, you saw walk up the vicarage pathway with the rest. He dawdled his time

away wickedly. People said he was clever, some even that he was brilliant, but all that he was the laziest dog they knew. For he was cursed with a handsome income. The three others always spoke of him in an apologetic tone. "It is only Dolly, you know," they said. He was so little, so insignificant, in comparison with these young giants. They would always take care of him, poor little fellow!

O'Brady had a letter of introduction from his father to old Daverell, who had been schoolfellows, and the four were taken to the old man's heart. They became frequent visitors at the parsonage, and they would generally arrange themselves round Hero's hammock, under the oak tree. It was truly a pleasant surprise to find a girl of Hero's stamp in such an out-of-the-way place.

It soon became evident that all the three were in love with the charming Hero, and that, of course, was very embarrassing. They grew suspicious of each other, and eagerly watched her to detect, if possible, any signs of preference in her manner towards any one of them. But she was too clever for that. They tried to get each other out of her way, in a most ridiculous fashion. Smith would say to the other two in the morning:

"Oh! I say, I am going off to the vicarage. What are you fellows going to do?"

"Curious! I had determined to go there also," would come from O'Brady. Also from Saunders; and it would end in the whole four going. But the crafty Saunders at length hit upon a plan, and he proposed it to the other two, who agreed upon it. They set off to go for a long walk, but each took a different route, and they arranged to meet again at a given time. But when Saunders had gone a little way, he turned, and, chuckling to himself, he made straight for the vicarage. Poor Saunders! He had hardly got into a comfortable swing chair, when Smith vaulted the wall. They regarded each other for a minute or two with something like coolness, but in the moment of their disappointment they could not restrain a smile, when O'Brady came panting up the garden path.

It was obvious they could not outwit each other, so they fell back upon the old order of things. They forgot all about poor Dolly. He did not always go with them to the oak tree in the vicarage garden, and when he did he could simply sit in the background, and watch the play. No chance in the heat of the battle for him to put in an oar. He was only poor Dolly, you know.

But one day he rebelled. "It's too bad, you know, Smith," he complained; "you ask a fellow to come to a dry old place like this, and then lump him unmercifully. Every morning, you, all three of you, go hanging round a girl, and leave me to amuse myself, and if I don't want to die of the blues, I've got to come too. I say it's too bad."

They were amazed, yet repentant. Dolly had never complained before.

"You never tied yourselves to a woman's apron strings in London, where you know dozens as pretty as this one," went on the doleful Dolly. "I'll tell all the fellows in London about it, and you'll see there will be the deuce to pay when you get back."

They looked glum. This was a new aspect of the matter.

"A fine story to be sure, that Smith, O'Brady, and Saunders went for a cross-country walk in different directions, and five minutes afterwards all landed in the same place, a girl's garden."

"You scoundrel!"

"But it's true. You couldn't live the day out away from the vicarage, I'll bet."

This was clearly a challenge, and an imperceptible smile played round Dolly's tiny mouth, as they caught at his bait.

"I'll bet you five shillings we do," said O'Brady, and Smith, and Saunders, almost in one breath.

"Yes, but you would want me to keep you alive, you never could do without me, you know."

It would be slow, indeed, without Dolly, and they knew it. But they were on their mettle. They would show Dolly what they could do. They would reduce his capital by fifteen shillings. He would have only a poor story for those London fellows. So they arranged to set off next morning, and they did. Another faint smile became visible on Dolly's face, as he waved his hand to the three stalwart forms, armed with fishing rods, and with baskets slung over their shoulders, turning the last corner in the road.

"Poor Dolly will be miserable to-day," said Smith, when they could see his face no longer, "but it is his own fault, you know."

"His own fault, of course," assented the other two.

In the evening the fishermen returned. Their baskets were light, but their hearts were heavy. They had won the bet, but each one of them, if he told the truth, would have said that he wished he had

not. The whole thing looked different now. They felt crusty and tired, and ready to quarrel. What did they care for all the men in London, for Dolly, or his challenges; they had been fools, and had spent a long, tedious day, by the side of a dirty trout stream, when they might have been basking under an old oak tree, in the smiles of Hero Daverell. That was how they felt when Dolly greeted them home again. He, too, was provokingly cheerful. His loneliness had not hung heavily on his hands. But then he had no goddess to smile on his life, whose presence was sunshine, and whose absence pain. He was only Dolly, you know.

"Well, my three Isaacs," he beamed, "what success? However do you carry those baskets so easily? So strong you must be. What! nothing, Smith? You too, O'Brady, and you, Saunders, with two tiny things which look more like sprats than trout. Why, what on earth is the matter? How glum you look!"

"Confoundedly bright day," growled Smith. "Never had a rise."

"Smith never threw his fly once, and he nearly dammed the stream with pebbles," said Saunders.

"The fact is we've had a beastly time," remarked O'Brady. "Dolly, I'll thank you for five shillings, and, I may say, that the job is a very cheap one at the figure."

Dolly paid the bets forthwith, and contemplatively watched them as they pulled off their boots. Pipes were lit, and after a lengthy, and, on the part of the trio, a moody silence, Smith carelessly asked:

"By-the-bye, Dolly, what on earth have you been doing with yourself? You look as pleased as punch, and yet you've been alone all day. You're an enigma."

"Oh! me?" said Dolly. "You don't want to know what I've been doing, do you? It'll bore you."

"Come on, we'll listen," said Smith, condescendingly.

"Well, then, I've been fishing, too. What do you think of that?"

"Fishing?"

"Yes, and more than that, I landed my fish, a real beauty."

"Explain yourself, Dolly, for Heaven's sake," cried they, for Dolly had never been known to cast a fly in his life.

"Well, the fact of the matter is briefly this;" and Dolly's little figure looked quite handsome, as he drew himself up to the full length of his five feet three. "I've proposed to the girl I love, and she has accepted me."

"The deuce! Who is she?" they demanded in one voice.
But already they grasped the truth, and were sick at heart.

"Miss Hero Daverell," said Dolly, in a painfully clear voice.
"Congratulate me. I am the happiest creature in the world."

Those three men had been blind for two months.

To Phyllis, to go a-fishing.

List, my Phyllis, I entreat,
I've a secret to discover :
I have found a rare retreat,
Come a-fishing with your lover !

I have found a hidden stream,
Visited by dipping swallows,
Troutlets in the shallows gleam,
Big ones drowse in darkened hollows !

Clear of weed and tangled tree—
Just a perfect lady's river ;
Wading to your dainty knee,
Sweetheart, will not make you shiver.

You the choicest pools shall try—
Competent I know your skill is ;
Lightly drops your dancing fly—
Sweetest, neatest-handed Phyllis !

When we've ceased our happy toil,
I will smoke, beside you sitting,
Counting o'er the silver spoil,
Watching water-ouzels flitting.

Come then, Phyllis, I entreat,
Leave your milliner and glover ;
You're an angler most complete,
Come a-fishing with your lover !

ELSIE MARION MOTT.

At the Sign of the Crown.

THE TRUE STORY OF HOW THEY PARTED.

By HESTER WHITE.

"BUT gracious heavens, Royal Highness, what will the Prince say!" A note of anxiety quivered through the infectious rippling laugh of the stout, good-natured little lady who spoke.

"The Prince! *he* will not care," was the answer, given with a flavour of bitterness. "Have you not yet discovered, Hildegarde, that complete indifference causes him to allow me my own sweet will in everything? Besides he is only expected at Murgau to-morrow evening, we shall reach there in the morning. The servants and Count Hermann, and the fairy god-mother will have got in before us; he need never know that I did not also take part in the stately procession of carriages well provided with retainers of all descriptions, and labelled 'Royalty,' 'Fragile,' 'Great care.' Pah! I am sick of it, the stiffness, the *gêne*, the nonsense—I should suffocate if I didn't break out now and then with the assistance of my kind little friend. Ah! these sweet souls (I know they have souls) are fresh and true," she continued, snatching up a bunch of wild flowers and burying her nose in them, "I will forget it all and enjoy freedom while I can; three days' holiday, Hildegarde, not a long one. Look at those forget-me-nots in the stream beneath the trees, that is a meadow to dream of; stop Anton!" and as the picturesque driver of the ramshackle hired vehicle drew up, she opened the door, jumped out and offered her hand to the Countess, bowing low.

"Permit me, Princess, to assist you to descend: be careful that the step does not sprain your ankle: do not over-exert yourself, I beg." Then with a ringing laugh she raced down the hill through the long grass and daisies, mercilessly dragging her breathless companion after her, who vainly screamed and protested.

Ilma, wife of the Erbprinz Karl Luitpold, of Bairingen-Thurm-turg, and daughter of the well-known Archduke Rudolf August, was at this time about twenty-two. She had the figure of a young Juno; a small well-poised head, a low forehead, a mass of thick, soft,

brown hair, a Paul-Veronese complexion, and dark grey eyes which changed with every mood. Her present one was mischievous.

Once established on the bank of a clear mountain stream, she obliged her unwilling companion to remove a pair of elegant tan shoes and stockings.

"Now be a good child," she cried, "I will assist you, I am stronger than you, I have great faith in the water cure; dear, dear, what a lace petticoat for a simple tourist! It is useless resisting and spluttering."

"But, Princess——"

Soon four white feet dabbled in the cool water; the slight shadow that had passed over the Princess had not remained long. Even the weight of an "arranged" marriage to a man fifteen years older than herself, in which the inclinations of neither of those most concerned had been studied, failed to destroy her holiday. She threw herself back amongst the flowers, her hands clasped under her head; sang snatches of German songs, rivalled the clamour of the brook, shouted, joddled and laughed, and teased her friend in a manner truly undignified.

When they continued their drive, amidst lamentations from Countess Hildegard (after reducing half-a-dozen fine cambric handkerchiefs to uselessness, and hanging them out to dry on every available portion of the carriage) the royal lady became more serious.

"What would Luitpold say if he had seen us just now?" she said. "How shocked he would have been, and how surprised. I am glad he is well out of the way on his mountaineering expedition; he looks upon me as a stiff, awkward child, who never knows when to get up and when to sit down, and who is hopeless as regards court etiquette. He should have chosen a model of stateliness like the Archduchess, my cousin Anna, she wouldn't require freezing up, she is frozen up already. I do not care," she continued lightly. After a short pause, a little sigh escaped her and flew off on the breeze. "If he likes what is grave and solemn, he shouldn't have married me, not for all the political or social reasons in the world. I am sure I try to compose myself into the necessary decent decorum when I am with him; but oh Hildegard, it oppresses me, it brings a choking feeling here in my throat, it makes me stupid."

"Royal Highness, the Prince is so handsome, so charming."

"I should not talk like this, I know. You are safe dear, you won't tell tales; and—well, I think it is hard, wicked, that we cannot choose for ourselves. I want love, *love*, sunshine, not an atmosphere of indifference—anything but indifference; I should sometimes like to make him angry, yet I am afraid! I am afraid of that look of quiet disapproval in his eyes, it maddens me. Never mind, we won't talk of it. Look at that hawk up there in the blue, how still he is, with just a tiny flutter of his wicked eye on a poor, unsuspecting little bird; someone must always be a victim in this world, I suppose."

"Does Royal Highness compare the Prince to a hawk?" asked the countess, demurely. The girl flushed and turned as if she had been struck.

"No, no!" she said, "I may be the victim, but he is an eagle—a—a lion, there is nothing mean or small about Luitpold."

* * * *

Late in the afternoon the travellers reached the small town of Birn, and rattled over the rough cobbles of the wide main street, drawing up at the Crown Inn. A black and yellow Austrian flag waved over the entrance, and several smaller ones of brilliant hue, hung from the windows.

"Gracious powers!" cried Princess Ilma, "surely they have not found me out, can I go nowhere without flags?" But on questioning Anton, it appeared there had been some small fête, and that the good townspeople on these occasions, were wont to make the "Crown" the centre of their festivities. The Princess was in high delight and declared this to be just what she loved. The hood of their carriage was up and their thick gauze veils down; so the two quietly-dressed ladies who descended and asked for a bedroom, were scarcely noticed by the loiterers. They gave their names—Madame Meyer and her niece, Fräulein Beck.

A pleasant room on the first floor was to be had, the landlady said, but would the ladies mind taking their meals in their own apartment; there was a dance this evening in the "Gaststube."* The gentlemen and ladies of the town were about to enjoy themselves, the musicians had already arrived; it was very fine, the decorations superb. However, she would talk no more, but lead the way to the room and hasten to bring coffee, rolls, veal cutlets: the gracious ladies must be hungry.

* Guest room, public room in an inn.

It was a quaint place, which in old days had been the mansion of some important personage ; as they reached the top of the broad carved oak staircase, a door on the landing opened and a lady came out. She was a striking figure and hardly what they had expected to see in a country inn ; not very young, dark, with the remains of great beauty. She was dressed in a flowing tea-gown, of wine-coloured velvet, with a collar of point lace, diamonds gleamed in her ears and at her throat. She scarcely heeded the strangers, and the landlady smiled and made signs behind her back as she disappeared.

"Is she going to attend the ball?" asked the Princess, as they were ushered into a large fusty-smelling apartment, arched, and with frescoed walls ; in which two small mahogany bedsteads, and the inevitable writing bureau and a brown rep sofa and chairs, looked very much out of place.

The woman replied as she opened the windows and threw back the shutters.

"Oh no, she is a great Italian lady, a Countess Lucia Boldini ; she has been here two days and she is rarely seen ; she stays upstairs, and at times sketches by the river with her maid. Ah ! the musicians are tuning, perhaps, later on, the gracious ladies will take part, it is not unusual for guests to do so—indeed last year an English Fräulein——"

"But, pray hasten with our meal," the Countess interrupted, hastily. She had noticed an ominous gleam of mischief in the Princess's eyes.

"And bring up our box at once," added the latter. The door closed.

"Dearest Princess, but it is impossible !"

"And wherefore ?"

"The line must be drawn somewhere."

"Why should I not enjoy myself ?"

"Consider the risk, the chance of discovery !"

"Well, don't alarm yourself, Hildegard dear—you are as bad as the fairy god-mother ; it was only a thought, I will watch from the balcony in all state. I cannot sit here smoking cigarettes and gazing at that gloomy procession on the wall the whole evening. I see a door at the end of the room there, it cuts off the helmet and takes a good slice out of the knight and his horse, who is riding under that portcullis ; he is shaking his head at a crown apparently. Wise man say I ; let us peep."

When their hunger was satisfied the two ladies proceeded to array themselves in the garments they had provided as being suitable to Madame Meyer and Fräulein Beck; alpaca skirts, silk bodices of a tartan invented in Germany, and smart ribbon ties. Princess Ilma, being ready first, proceeded downstairs in spite of the Countess's protestations, to reconnoitre as she said; the view from the little wooden balcony off her room had not satisfied her.

Before many minutes the door burst open and she re-entered; she was pale as a ghost and trembling violently.

"What has happened?" cried the other in alarm.

"What has happened! *He* is there, I saw him; Luitpold!" was the answer, given in a white-heat of passion.

"The Prince! Great heavens! But, dearest Princess, there is no need for such distress!"

"You do not understand; no need! I will tell you—listen! I went downstairs, I saw a man standing in the entrance, with his back towards me; I thought the figure seemed familiar, then I heard his voice; he was *whistling, laughing*, and talking with some of the people. I drew back and just then he bounded upstairs, almost brushing against me as I crouched behind the portière. He looked different; so brown, so happy. 'Who is that gentleman?' I asked of the landlady who appeared at that moment. She said she did not know his name, but he had come an hour since to—to—" she turned away breathless, paced the room to the frescoed doorway and returned, "to—to *visit the Countess Boldini!*"

"Merciful powers, it cannot be! Royal Highness is surely mistaken!"

"Mistaken! would I mistake my own husband; he has gone to see her! This is his mountaineering expedition—it is cruel, abominable, wicked. I know he never loved me, but this is too much, to be under the same roof with the woman he does love, who is the cause of his indifference to me! To know it, to have to submit to the insult! I will not, I shall leave at once, I shall go straight to Dornberg-Schwengau, to mama. Ah! to see him just now and to remember the face he shows to me—it is intolerable! Ring, I will go."

"But dearest, *dearest* Princess, it cannot be, the landlady may be wrong; at any rate, let us consider a moment. Why jump at a conclusion and vex yourself so, the Prince was in the neighbourhood, maybe; he knows this lady, it—it occurred to him to call—

and—we will wait quietly here until it is late and he has gone, then we will order the carriage and drive to the next village. The accommodation is certain to be bad, but—”

The girl had continued to pace the room, her hands behind her, which she restlessly clasped and unclasped; suddenly she stopped in front of her troubled little friend and drew herself up.

“Say no more,” she said. “I will stay. Happily, I care not, he may do as he likes, but I shall also; I shall amuse myself. Do not oppose me, Hildegard, I am going down to the dance; finish your toilette—here, pin in these flowers—I am ready, come.”

The Countess knew well the character she had to deal with; she was ten years older than the Princess, and had been her friend for fifteen; she said no more, but followed meekly with a silent prayer.

In the ball-room the fun had already begun. Ladies, in wonderful costumes; figured muslins, pink, red and green blouses (ornamented with artificial flowers), cotton mittens, even crinolines, were already engaged in the hopping *trois-temps* waltz, which seemed to prevail in Birn. Gentlemen, curled and pomatumed, wearing fancy ties and waistcoats, stood in the first position and bowed to their partners. A few “Kaiser-Zäger” officers, in their light grey uniforms—who had risen from the ranks, and were, at that time, stationed in the town, with a portion of their regiment—seemed to be the stars of the evening.

Directly the two strangers appeared, the master of the ceremonies presented himself, placed them on a bench against the wall, and proceeded to bring up a string of beaux, who had requested to be introduced, according to foreign etiquette. A queer crew they were, and the Princess did not attempt to suppress her laughter. Such a merry lady, with wonderful eyes, was a great attraction, and soon she was besieged with requests for a dance; laughingly she acceded, being in boisterous spirits, reckless and absolutely outrageous. The little countess turned up her eyes in despair, but remonstrance was useless; at last she philosophically decided that it was wisest to make the best of a bad job, and get all possible amusement out of this novel entertainment.

Before long Princess Ilma noticed a tall, good-looking youth in what seemed to her a private's uniform. “He is a cadet,” explained her partner, “he is not yet an officer, allow me, mein Fräulein, to present him, Baron Max von Ratski-Burgstadt.”

Yes, he was of a different type to the rest. A two hour's experience then fell to the share of that budding young soldier, which he remembered to the end of his days. Years later, when looking at a photograph of the Grand Duchess of Bairingen-Thurmburg, in a shop window in Vienna, he wondered why the face appeared so familiar to him. Here was a clever, lively boy, who had for the last six weeks been deprived of the society of his equals. How they danced and laughed and quizzed the people; she threw over all others for him, the bookseller's son, even the "Bürgermeister" himself; duels were imminent—but she did not care. Within an hour he was deeply in love; in his life he had never before met such a brilliant, audacious, enchanting creature. He must marry her, he *would* marry her some day, he thought—even though a Fräulein Beck, and—as she told him herself, with charming simplicity—the daughter of a linen draper, in Prag. What would his mother say, the proud stately Baroness! No doubt it would be a blow; yet nothing else was possible, and perhaps there was money which would soften matters.

"Oh, dearest niece, will you not come away now?" whispered the Countess once in passing. "It is getting late, and I have had an offer from the Postmaster—what would Franz say!"

"No, no, Auntie," was the reply, "Baron Max and I are very happy," and she turned on him a glance quite distracting. She had not noticed a tall figure that for the last hour had watched her narrowly from the shadow of the doorway, and from the musician's gallery, always remaining hidden. She did not see now that as she passed through the windows into the large, overgrown, old garden, the same figure entered it by another door.

On a bench in an arbour, covered with reddening virginia creeper, she and Max von Radski sat together. The half empty beer mugs and cigar ash on the table did not disturb them.

"Mein Fräulein, and you will not tell me when I may see you again?" he said, after much else. You leave to-morrow—how can I live, when such a dream of beauty and charm is withdrawn. Ah, be kind to me, let me not lose you forever!"

Taking her hand he kissed it fervently; in another moment a shadow darkened the entrance, the tall figure stood before them. The Princess sprang to her feet as if she had been shot; her companion followed her example, frowning at the interruption and

staring in astonishment at the military-looking stranger, with the handsome sunburnt face and fair curling hair and moustache, who had risen from the earth at such an unpropitious moment.

"Ilma," the man said, in a quiet tone of command. "Come with me, I wish to speak to you."

She did not answer, young Max read some fear, mingled with defiance, in her eyes; his first involuntary impulse had been to stand at attention and salute, but he recovered himself and bristled with chivalrous indignation; he stepped forward.

"Pardon me," he said. "This lady has been good enough to entrust herself at the present moment to my care; therefore, I have the right to protect her from what is offensive to her."

The tall man bowed.

"Thank you, sir," he replied, with icy politeness. Something in his tone made the young fellow colour to the roots of his hair. "I am obliged, but I do not speak without full right to do so. Ilma, will you come?"

She looked straight at him, and grew white.

"I will not," she said.

Then her champion again advanced.

"Sir!" he exclaimed angrily. "I cannot permit this behaviour, I must——" but before he could say more, the other waved him away with a gesture of extreme haughtiness.

"Sir," he said, "I owe you an explanation; this lady is my wife. Ilma, will you take my arm."

The boy gazed from one to the other in supreme astonishment; her eyes were on the ground, she made no denial, but slowly placed her hand on her husband's arm. Max von Ratski bowed low as they left the arbour and walked silently to the terrace near the river.

When they were hidden from prying eyes, they separated and confronted each other.

"Ilma," he asked, and his usually quiet voice showed some emotion. "What is the meaning of this? Why are you here?"

She was pale with anger, and turned on him.

"How dare you ask me!" she cried, blazing. "How dare you! Ah! it is always so, a woman may not indulge in a harmless frolic; but a man, a man can do everything and it is to pass unnoticed, unblamed.

A look of surprise came into the face ; could this possibly be the girl-wife he thought so apathetic ? The radiant sparkling being he had watched for the last hour, and now this passionate, bitter woman ?

"I do not understand you," he said.

"Ask the beautiful Countess Boldini," she continued. "Why are you in Birn ? Tell me that ! Am I nothing, a stupid child, who is to remain by your side, unnoticed, unloved—while you——"

"Great God, Ilma, who has told you this ?" he asked, but he flushed, and a slight embarrassment was apparent in his voice ; for the first time in his life the Princess had her husband at a disadvantage, it was a new position for them both.

"Do you deny you came to visit her ?"

"I—I do not, we were—friends long ago—I——"

"Do not touch me, do not come near me, I know it, you love her——"

"Ilma, listen, be reasonable, I—I loved her—once, but that is over, I thought I should like to see her again—she wrote—if I had not caught sight of you, I should have been on my way to Murgau by this— Child, how could I think you would care——"

"I do not care—not one atom, but it explains all to me. I know now why you never——"

"Never what ?"

"Nothing, nothing, leave me alone. It is the climax, I can bear it no longer ; to-morrow I will go with Countess Maldegen to Mama, at Dornberg-Schwengau. It is all over between you and me ; perhaps you may even regain your freedom ; I cannot, I will not forgive you."

"But, Ilma !"

"Leave me ; go, go ! send Hildegard."

And when he had gone, she leaned on the stone wall, above the murmuring Ach, and cried from rage, vexation and many mingled feelings she was powerless to analyse.

* * * *

Prince Luitpold and Countess Hildegard Maldegen were standing in the garden, near the river, on the very spot where the last scene of the drama of the preceding evening had been enacted.

"Alas, sir, she will not see you, she is determined ; the carriage

is to come round at eight, and we are to proceed to Dornberg-Schwengau, where the Arch-duchess is staying at present."

"But, Countess, it is impossible!" A sleepless night had left its mark on the Prince, he looked worn and harassed. "What can I do, what can I say—will nothing change her?"

"Royal Highness, I have done my best."

"Ah, I am too old for her," he continued sadly. "This is the end; she is miserable with me, I cannot blind myself to the fact. Last night I watched her and that overgrown boy for fully an hour; she was a different being, a happy, bright, joyous creature, brimful of life—it maddened me——"

"But the Prince can be a boy himself sometimes," said the Countess, quietly.

He could not help smiling; it was true; he knew so well how much a boy he was at heart still in many things.

"Never in her eyes," he said. "To her I am old, pedantic, solemn; a judge and a schoolmaster. Good God, Countess, is it too late? Am I to lose her just as——"

"Just as——?"

"Just as——as the meeting with an old love, whose memory I have foolishly allowed to haunt and absorb me, has shown me the truth?"

"Ah!"

He turned away and stood for a few minutes looking out across the river to the green mountain slopes; she saw that he was moved by some strong emotion. Presently he faced her again; he was very pale, but composed.

"Will you go to her now," he said, "and tell her I have considered her decision and consent to her departure, (much good it would do if I did not!) after due thought and deliberation I have come to the conclusion that the course she has fixed upon is right, under the circumstances; wisest and best for us both. I only beg she will grant me a few minutes interview before leaving: we may not meet again for many a long day."

"But, Prince——"

"Will you be so kind as to tell the Princess this."

The Countess went, and e'er long a tall figure in white, with a drooping head, came down the garden path; they confronted each other, as they had the night before, but now they were, at any rate, outwardly calm.

"I have come."

"You have come."

"To bid you farewell."

"Thank you, I am obliged, it is best to part as friends."

"It is best."

"Can I do anything to assist you in your arrangements, anything for your comfort?"

"Thank you, no, Countess Maldegen has done all."

"May I be permitted to kiss your hand? Who knows when and where we shall meet again?"

"It is unnecessary, yet——"

"Thank you; will you allow me to conduct you to your carriage?"

"On no account, I prefer to go alone."

"Farewell, God speed. My affectionate and respectful meetings to the Arch-duchess."

"Thank you. Farewell."

And so they parted.

* * * *

The ladies entered the carriage which was already at the door.

"My bracelet!" cried the Princess suddenly. "I have lost it. Where can it be? I will run and see, I was in the garden. No, no, Hildegard, I wish to go, I alone can tell on what paths I walked; make them leave me to myself I beg of you!"

It was not near the arbour, the terrace showed no sign of it; perhaps by the river. She ran quickly without pausing. The Prince was standing in the same place, motionless, his eyes fixed upon the stream. At the sound of a footstep on the gravel he turned.

"Ilma!"

"Luitpold!"

"Ilma, what is it?"

Her hands were on his shoulders, her face raised to his.

"Luitpold, ah, Luitpold, forgive me, do not send me from you!"

"Ilma, is it true? My child, my little love! Thank God. Will you learn to forget my age, will you try to——"

"Ah, be silent, be silent; I—I love you."

Nine Points of the Law.

By CHRISTIE DUTTON.

SCENE.—A Lodging House at an English Watering Place.

TIME.—Summer.

OUTSIDE the heat was oppressive, the air heavy and silent; the very birds seemed to have lost their voices; men, women and animals passing along the streets, all wore a similar aspect, that of limpness, dejection, weariness; it was the stillness heralding a storm.

Inside at No. 10, Bellevue, the air was also sultry, the stillness conspicuous by its absence. The landlady's voice, together with the odour of frizzling bacon, penetrated from attic to coal cellar; the storm had burst.

"This mess is my niece's making, ladies and gentlemen, and she's left. I say it again, it must just be the first party as took these rooms as keeps 'em."

Martha Tibbins rested her plump hands on her plump hips; she was regarding complacently the impatient quartet seated before her in the shabby parlour. The three ladies straightened themselves on their three high-backed chairs, and gave three sighs of relief. Colonel Grey took out his watch and began an abstruse calculation; the landlady's fiat promised satisfaction. Miss Lamb gave a slight premonitory cough, her sensitive face flushed crimson, her eyelids fluttered. "I think," she began meekly, "I may truthfully state, I took these rooms last Friday week, at midday——"

"Pardon, madam," the Colonel shut his chronometer with a click, and approached her; there was a menacing frown on his ruddy forehead. "My watch gains twenty minutes every day; I set it right every Sunday evening by Greenwich time; when I took these rooms that same Friday, it was thirty minutes past one. I have this moment calculated my call must have been precisely on the stroke of noon, indeed a little before. I have the prior claim."

"Excuse me." Mrs. Jellicorse was very warm, her present state of feelings did not tend to cool her, her face did not resemble marble. "I also took these rooms on Friday. I was told they were vacant by

yon, not your niece. I have as much right to keep them as anyone. My husband will be here directly, and" (with a withering glance and a triumphant little bow) "my husband is a lawyer!"

It was an awful threat! Miss Lamb heard it and blanched; her eyes had been downcast, they had seen only the yellow flower on the blue carpet, the dust on the table leg; now she raised her head and they saw in close proximity that terrifying group, in the approaching future, a possibility of far worse moment.

She rose from her chair, her voice trembled. "I relinquish my claim. Miss Tibbins, pray show me out." She bowed, a little jerkily, perhaps; as the door closed after her, an acrid laugh burst from the fourth belligerent. "You won't frighten me away! Maria Hampson is not made of such material. I took these rooms on Thursday"—— She did not deem it necessary to add Thursday last. "I keep them, and my brother is a *barrister*."

The Colonel got up, with a muttered ejaculation on the "music of female tongues," he seized his hat, slipped past the ladies, and departed.

The matron and the maid were left alone.

Madam Jellicorse rang the bell for tea. Maria Hampson was famished; a second tea, however, would be charged for; she sat on therefore, her angular figure drawn to its full height, her twitching lips steadying themselves in a grim, indifferent smile, her eyes watching buttered eggs and marmalade disappear with praiseworthy fortitude.

There was a low murmur of thunder in the distance, two or three big drops of rain fell like pebbles against the window pane. Madam hardly noticed it, she was growing drowsy over her fourth cup of tea. There was a piano in the room; the spinster opened it: sitting down she began a Polonaise of Chopin's, *fortissimo*.

The lightning became more vivid, the thunder louder and more frequent; Maria was getting to the end of her flourishes, her notes were uncertain; she feared the storm, she dreaded the actual arrival of the lawyer might accomplish more than the fictitious advent of his superior; also she was beginning to feel—— a void. Suddenly there was a startling rap at the door, the landlady's head appeared: she wore a benignant smile. "If you please, Madam, the lady hupstairs is telegraphed for to her brother; one of you can have her rooms."

Maria drew herself up, her lips lengthened into a veritable smile of

contempt, her hands crashed out a decisive chord on the keys before her.

"I took *these* rooms. I keep them."

The matron jumped up hurriedly. "Stay! I will take them, they are larger and have a finer view."

The door closed again, the spinster rose in triumph.

"Maria Hampson, you have conquered! Now for my bedroom, then for supper!"

She crossed the passage, opened the bedroom door, then fell back; a piercing scream rang through the house.

The window curtains were drawn, the gas light revealed the Colonel in his night cap, snugly ensconced in bed — blissfully smoking!

More Sketches in a Sixpenny Hotel.

By HALBORO DENHAM.

THE Surrey side is a land of big distances and cheap tram rides, and its exploration, sketch-book in hand, would be a large order for one in search of the picturesque, the quaint, and the historic; but somehow these bits of interest seem to the average visitor few and far between. The famous "George," almost the last of our ancient London taverns, boasting of a galleried coach yard, still lingers with such old-world attractiveness, that it seems churlish not to turn from the busy Borough pavement for a moment and taste of mine host's ale.

Lambeth Palace has surely much in its associations and aspect to tempt a visit, but it is a far cry from the "George" to the Palace. The main roads radiating from the bridge-heads across what used to be the Surrey Marshes, are connected by narrow streets, which to the ordinary individual from other localities, remain unprepossessing and unknown, albeit Albert Chevalier has rendered the costers of the district famous, and in a sense fashionable enough. Thus it is that to many dwellers in South London, much of what is popularly called the "Surrey Side," is *terra incognita*. Thousands, for

example, who daily travel from Blackheath, Peckham, or Sydenham to the City, have never set foot in that seemingly out-of-the-way riverside quarter which faces Saint Paul's Wharf. There is plenty of brewery and barge business, but there is no Embankment, and so it is left alone, even by the penny steamboat.

But on the day when, with the aid of a halfpenny tram ride, we first penetrated into the interior of the colossal pile which towers about the prettily planted graveyard of St. Mary's, and within a stone's throw from the ruins of the famous Tabernacle, we were more intent on the survey of men and manners than quaint corners and local history. To our surprise we unearthed a cheery old acquaintance of yore, who had chipped about the world a great deal, and we right gladly accepted his offer to act as friend, philosopher and guide. Truly we might have gone further and fared worse, for he knew the ropes, and the folk of that latitude, although, to be sure, he had, alas, knocked about to such little purpose, that, thanks to the war, here he was down on his luck again, along with eight-hundred fellow mortals inhabiting Rowton House.

He was just back from the Sunny South, and thus it fell out that here, in our sixpenny hotel of all places in the world, we lighted on up-to-date "copy" from the lips of one red hot from Peninsular scenes of national excitement and patriotic enthusiasm.

"But come; let me pilot you through my hotel."

We had been sitting listening to our friend, and sampling his Spanish cigarettes, as he rattled on about Spanish politics, in the vestibule which is adorned with flowers and palms. Indeed, the improvements in details are so numerous in this the latest of Rowton Hotels, that it suggests the possibility of a guest at the buildings to be erected in Whitechapel and Hammersmith, being pleasantly soothed by the sight of fountains and goldfish.

"Here," said our guide, as we turned into the spacious library, "all the engravings are Shakesperian."

We looked at these, and then glanced at the titles of the volumes in a book-case close at hand, and we were not surprised to learn that books, like the Odes of Horace, and so forth, are much above the minds of the average frequenters of the library, with whom a halfpenny "Evening," or a dip into a racy novel is more in vogue. Still, it is strange to notice how, even in this kind of thing, the unexpected will happen. Yonder, for example, is a stalwart

young navvy, who not only patronises some of the authors of the more solid sort, but will, in the evening, after having demolished the best part of a couple of pounds of beef steak and a pint or two of tea, adjourn to the chess board, and play a fairly intelligent game. These men have mostly picked up their knowledge of chess in the barrack-room, for many of them have served in the army.

One cannot help reflecting that something is wrong in the short service system which dispenses with such strapping fellows, just when, with developed physique and finished training, they are fit to go anywhere or do anything. John Bull is certainly the loser.

Talking of navvies, our pilot told us a typical anecdote.

"I once," said he, "went to see a friend, who as a civil-engineer, was working on the completion of the inner circle railway. Very handy to the works stood a busy pub, wherein excellent lunches were provided, and thither I was straightway invited to a meal. We had hardly settled down to it, when the landlord came into the room, and announced, with every sign of excitement, that his cellars, on the size and contents of which he justly prided himself, had been burgled from the cutting, and, worse still, were actually being plundered at that moment."

"'They have taken dozens of sherry and port, and champagne too!' quoth the host.

"Well, we all went down with a plain clothes man, and sure enough, a brawny hand, with a leathern wristband, came groping through an aperture broken in the side of the tunnel. To cut the story short, the owner of that fist was apprehended, and under his jacket, in a recess of the tunnel, we found empty bottles galore. He was brought up before the magistrate, but somehow remanded on bail. When the day came for his second appearance, he duly turned up arrayed in bran-new togs and a glorious coloured scarf; and having received an excellent character from the engineer, was sentenced to a term of six weeks; thereupon, he asked if he might speak to his 'boss,' whose first remark was, 'Why, man, I thought you were at the other end of England by now! What made you show up?'

"'Well, guv'nor, we was all in the swim, and my mates stood these here togs and a fiver for me to bear the blame. When my time's up, will you take me back?'"

"I may add that the engineer took the man back, for he was

one of the best hands who had ever worked for him and by that token, you see that tall, hatchet-faced young man, with the clay turned upside down in the corner of his jaw? Well, he was that self-sacrificing champagne burglar. I can assure you he plays a very decent game of draughts or chess. Why, of course, those fellows working down in a hot tunnel could polish off barrels with impunity!"

This story made us rather thirsty, and so we took advantage of a proposal to sit down and have a cup of tea. At a neighbouring table were a trio of costers enjoying a stew which they had cooked in partnership, and the total cost of which, we discovered by their conversation, amounted to less than a shilling. This was how they reckoned up the expenditure: Three pounds of breast of mutton at 2½d.; one pound of potatoes, 1d.; a pennyworth of carrots; a pennyworth of onions, making 10½d. in all. The stew looked excellent, and the men evidently thought it a *chef d'œuvre*; and as we sat, a group of some half-dozen, over our tea and brown bread and butter and tasty bit of cold boiled bacon from the hotel bar, we talked and thought not a little over our surroundings.

It has been said in a previous article that Charles Dickens would have found Rowton Houses rare fields for "copy," and the more one examines the lessons of life they offer, the truer the remark appears. The evils of drink, idleness, want of will and pluck are plainly illustrated, but so is the value of thrift and energy.

Not so long ago, there came, fresh from his native Wicklow Hills, or rather, to be exact, from Dublin, where he was a medical instrument maker, a huge young Hibernian, with a brogue you could have cut with a knife. He was anxious to sell a herbal cancer cure, and, poor chap, honestly believed he was offering a grand article. It was close on 9 p.m. when a benevolent policeman told this young stranger in Modern Babylon that he had better make his way to Rowton House, and once there he was informed, as a new comer, he must bide a bit and take his chance with other would-be lodgers. In his perplexity he came up to an elderly German gentleman, contemplatively smoking his pipe of peace amidst the palms and flowers in the entrance hall.

"Pardon me, sorr, but could ye koindly tell me how they can book me?"

The German enlightened him, and as the days slipped by, saw the stranger get more and more downcast. The cure would not sell. Ultimately a loan or two of the vital sixpence was willingly granted by the German to whom the blushing hesitancy of the Wicklow lad was a very rare, refreshing, and pleasant novelty. The loans were duly repaid, with the exception of twopence, and then the Irishman suddenly disappeared. A couple of months later, the good-natured Teuton, on returning from his day's business, was told that his big Wicklow boy was looking for him high and low, and sure enough his hand was presently in the grip of the long absent one, who said, "Ah, sorr! I am so glad to say ye! And how are ye? Now would ye be so koind as to come and have a glass of brandy? Bring your friends—all of them. They won't look at the cancer cure, but I'm in regular work, and have a jewel of an old landlady to look atther me. Come and have tea with me at Chelsea next Sunday, sorr."

The old German gladly drank to this honest and warm-hearted Irishman's luck, and as they shook hands and parted, the twopence was returned to one who has long forgotten many a lost sovereign loaned to others in years gone by.

As may be supposed, among such a heterogenous collection of individuals, not a few original characters are to be found. The new-comer is not long in the House before bumping up against the "artful cadger," who is hard pressed for even one penny to make up the magic "tanner" required for a bed. It is astonishing how successful this profession—some people are so lacking in refinement as to term it game—becomes. Among so many hundreds of people, the large area of probability appears a splendid field for systematic operation, and it is not too much to say that a discriminating expert often brings in during the course of an evening enough cash to afford the wherewithal to keep him in booze for the following day.

Our old German acquaintance who came into contact with one of the most wily and bland of this fraternity, gave us an amusing account of his experience. The A. C., who had been some time in the hotel, and knew the ropes, "happened" to be near when the German was desirous of obtaining some information regarding the place and its internal regulations. The A. C. did the polite so cleverly, that the inquirer, whom we shall call Mr. Jones, was charmed and only too pleased to oblige the "nice young man" with

the loan of a "bob" later on. The intimacy which sprang up from the "chance" meeting resulted in sundry advances at divers times until Mr. Jones, himself nearing the curbstones, ventured to request a small payment on account. Great was the surprise of the A. C. at the ignorance of Mr. Jones.

"Don't you know the rules of Rowton House?" he asked.

"What rules?" was the answer.

"Why, regarding loans, of course! My dear sir, anyone will tell you that the rule is to pay every creditor in his turn, so that no one can complain."

Mr. Jones was somewhat staggered, but mildly asked if these rules were cast iron, and even if they were, might they not, under the circumstances, be broken.

"Certainly not, sir," responded the indignant A. C. Then taking a small note book out of his pocket, he continued. "I find I owe forty people, and you come number thirty-eight on the list. I have just paid number three."

Astounded with such glib audacity, Mr. Jones essayed a stroke of humour.

"Well it is now two months since I lent you the money due, and you have paid three creditors in that time. According to this calculation my turn will come in about three years. As I am an old man, I fear it is a bad look out for me."

Nothing abashed by this interview, the A. C. boldly came again to the attack a few days later, when he calmly propounded the following question:

"Excuse me, sir, but I regret that I am terribly inconvenienced for the moment. I'll tell you what I'll do however. If you can oblige me with sixpence, I shall be happy to put you down as number four on my list, and give you my honour I shall stick to the contract."

"I would not think of being a party to such a flagrant breach of the rules of Rowton House," curtly answered Mr. Jones. "Keep your honour and I shall keep my sixpence, and pray don't speak to me any more."

Thereupon our German turned and left, not without, as he admitted in telling the story, a certain amount of admiration for the cool impudence of the A. C.

The gentle art of cadging, we may here state, is one of the learned

professions; cadgers, like great lawyers, being born not made. To ensure success, three conditions are absolutely essential, and they must all be possessed together, namely, a sharp eye, a quick clear judgment, and the right moment for attack. These are points in the pursuit which no practitioner can do without.

By the way, one of the most original of our acquaintances at Rowton House, claims to be a Swede, but boasts that he is a cosmopolitan, and can converse in fifteen different languages or dialects. He is about seventy years of age, and afflicted with chronic bronchitis which, as he is constantly asserting, may carry him off any night. This apprehension, instead of impelling him to prepare for another and better world, has precisely the reverse effect, a capacity for getting outside an unlimited quantity of alcoholic fluid being still unimpaired. Almost every penny he gets he spends, his one great dread being that he may die and leave a shilling behind him, which sum, he frequently observes, "would enable the man who gets it to make merry over my timely decease." His bosom friend is also a Swede about eight years younger, and the two old cronies, who both speak excellent English, are always wrangling. You will learn confidentially from either of them that the other is mad; but from what we saw and gathered, there are no signs of failing mental activity, on the contrary, we found them extremely amusing and entertaining.

Among so large a number of people of all sorts, dishonesty and theft are not so common as might be expected. There are occasional cases, however, which display perverted ingenuity almost grotesque in character. Some little while back a young man from the country put up at our hotel, and in accordance with his previous custom put his boots outside the door on going to bed. It need hardly be added that he had next morning reason to regret his simplicity. When the house first opened, a good looking though rather wild-eyed individual, wearing gold eye glasses, and his tall form enveloped in a valuable light cloak, came upon the scene. His wife, a sensible woman, as he himself admitted, had placed him in Rowton House, and kept him on short commons in hopes that he might be cured of his unconquerable hankering for stimulants. Well, it was not long before he gathered around him a circle of acquaintances and became a favourite field for exploitation for the A.C.'s, and other needy ones in the place. His brain having been

muddled by former bouts this made him more easy to work. Being hard up one morning he gladly seized the offer of one of the old hands to accompany him to a hospital where the aforesaid old hand knew a doctor who might be successfully bombarded for a "quid." The prospect of a jolly night opened up by the recital fired the imagination of the owner of the cloak, and so the two explorers started off on their voyage in search of gold. On arriving at the hospital the old hand ingeniously observed that he felt rather shabby in his delapidated garments, and that the momentary loan of his companion's cape might greatly increase his chances of pecuniarily propitiating the medical gentleman. This appeared so plausible to the other that he unthinkingly pulled off the cape and passed it over to the O.H., who, straightway donning the garment, obtained admittance to the doctor, leaving the owner waiting outside. Minute after minute passed, and then an hour, and still, although impatient, stood the waiting one. At last he rang the bell, only to learn that the old hand had quietly taken his exit long since through a door at the other end of the building. It is needless to say that the coat never came back, and no trace of the thief was ever discovered. But if ne'er-do-wells, Micawbers, and cadgers are to be found in Rowton House, so are plenty of hard working and steady men, and alas! not a few young fellows who are eating their hearts out whilst longing for the turn in fate that seems so long in coming. The cat alone is rigidly excluded, and we heard a dark and fearsome story, which went to show that should an unfortunate pussy in a moment of misplaced trust and confidence elect to smuggle herself through the entrance with a view to Rowtonian comforts, she is doomed to die that same night in the engine furnace. Where cleanliness is such a vital necessity cats are as well away, but we were glad to believe our friend from Spain when he added that this whisper of feline tragedies was nothing more than idle gossip.

Two of the most interesting characters we encountered during our stay at the Butts were ex-soldiers, one a pensioned veteran having had extensive experience in Canada during the old days when our red coats were quartered over there, and the other, comparatively a youngster, having served in the Royal Marine Artillery at home, and now working in the shipping business. The first of these, although a veteran, is by no means a war worn warrior, for he has never seen

a shot fired in anger, and seems quite proud of this fact after having roamed all over the Empire in the Queen's scarlet. His long and peaceful career has left a stamp of beaming benevolence and placid contentment on the countenance of this mild mannered man of Mars. He did indeed arrive in India just when the last angry sputterings of the Mutiny were dying out and was with a flying column in the Central Provinces, but not even a semblance of real fighting fell to his lot. Here is his story of how he missed a little fortune. "Whilst scouring the country in search of guerilla bands, which always gave us a wide berth, or looking vainly for traces of that blackguardly scoundrel Nana Sahib, we passed quickly through a village near Saugor, the name of which I forget. We were in a hurry to get to a place some miles further on, in the hopes of surprising and running to earth a rebel chief who we heard was in hiding there. I was with the rear guard, and pretty well the whole column had gone clean through the village when my mate, a chap named Moriarty, who was always poking his nose in every corner, suddenly left my side and peered through the entrance of one of the mud huts.

"Come along away out of that, Pat!" says I.

"Hold hard a bit, come here and look," says he. Well I did, and there sure enough in the inky darkness a pair of eyes seemed to gleam fire on us. I called to the fellow to show himself outside but devil a bit did he answer. So I went for him with the bayonet, and as the steel ran through him I thought its contact with the mud wall gave the sweetest sound I had ever heard, so full was I of vengeance on the natives for all their devildom and cruelty to our women and children. When, however, I lugged my bayonet out there was no yell, not even a moan, but the rebel simply fell forward and down we went together all of a heap on the floor. I crawled out of that uncanny den into the blazing sunshine, and Moriarty says:

"Why! man you're as white as a sheet. Have you killed him entirely? By jabbers I'll make sure."

So with that in he goes, and presently drags my supposed dead or dying rebel out, and it was nothing more than a big stuffed figure. Just a doll dressed up with a devil of a fierce moustache, and a pair of glittering stones for eyes. It was a native god which I had been prögging at with my bayonet, and mighty ashamed I felt at my first bit of war experience I can tell you. I was that

disgusted that I went off at the double, leaving Moriarty behind. In a few minutes I turned giddy and sick, and presently dropped as if shot. It was a bad sunstroke which knocked me up, with such a dose of fever on the top of it, that I was invalided. I never set eyes on Moriarty again until about ten years later when I was in Dublin during the Fenian rising. There I strolled one night into a whisky bar, and to my amazement bossing the show was Moriarty. Of course we had much to talk about, but what I most wanted to know was what good or evil fortune had brought him into the whiskey trade.

"Ah!" says he, "and sure don't ye recollect, Jim, the creature ye struck with yer bayonet? Maybe it was one of their hathen gods stowed away for hiding. Anyway I fished them stones out of his eyeholes, and when I got to Calcutta found they were real diamonds, and sold them for a thousand pounds. I bought my discharge, came home, and got this show." "When I went to find Moriarty next day he had vanished beyond ken, and all I was afterwards able to learn about him was that somehow he had got mixed up in the Fenian business and had bolted to New York. Yes, my encounter with that blessed old whiskered idol was my one and only adventure, and I missed a thousand quid there. But here gents comes another chap who had a thrilling experience when the dynamiters were at work some years ago."

We looked up and found a tall, dark and well set-up young fellow in blue serge, whose dress and bearing betokened better habits and better days than the majority of his fellow Rowtonians.

"I say, George," said the veteran, "what was that night attack you met single handed at Southsea?"

The other sat down alongside us smiling as if he were pretty well used to the reminder, and on venturing to express our perplexity as to the historical accuracy of the allusion, the young man in blue serge lit his briar, and without more ado, proceeded to satisfy our curiosity.

"You see," he began, "I was studying at Cambridge, but getting into a tangle over a girl I bolted into the Royal Marine Artillery. I soon had a fairly good billet, what with getting a first-class certificate, and playing the organ in church, and the piano in the canteen. I was a fool to leave the service. It was all over another girl cropping up."

"Well, but how about the night attack?"

We all interrupted in chorus just as the hero of the whiskered god with diamond eyes brought a teapot and crockery to anchor on our table.

"Oh! the night attack," said the ex-R.M.A. man, "was like this. We were at Fort Cumberland, a devilish lonely and bleak place as perhaps you fellows know. There were only a few men with one officer lying there, but the dynamite scare was in full swing, and sentry go was supposed to be so too. What a place for doing guard to be sure! The sea moaned and sobbed all night long, and there was to make things more weird, a perpetual clinking of chains, which tradition said was caused by the restless ghost of a French prisoner interned there during the big war. It was only the noise of a chain attached to a grating in the magazine wall, but with the sound of the sea and the wind, it helped to give us chaps the creeps whilst doing sentry go, which we cut as short as possible you bet. The officer would shove a cloak over his evening dress and come and ask if all was correct, and turn out the guard, and then turn in himself to his whisky and cigar. Then we all turned in to bed except one poor devil who made himself as comfortable as could be with a blanket in the sentry-box. One night, when lulled by the sound of the waves, and the clink, clink, clink of that chain, I had fallen snug asleep in the box, and was dreaming that my Cambridge lassie was about to be blown up with dynamite unless I could rescue her, I awoke with a start, and found myself, whilst struggling to wriggle out of the blanket, propped smartly in the back. It was as dark as Erebus, but I clutched for my rifle, and had no sooner got hold of it, than somehow the confounded thing went off. Then followed a deuce of a scene. Everybody came running into the yard, whilst the cause of all the excitement, a pet goat, ran bleating about. I never heard the last of that goat, and the story stuck painfully to me till I left the service."

"And how did that happen?" we asked.

"Oh! He's on the girls again," said the veteran, appearing at this stage with another detachment of requisites for a repast. "Now try my tea and radishes and bread and butter. Anything else you may want you can get from the bar."

So off went the man from Spain, and hospitably procured another

supply of cold boiled bacon such as we had already appreciated, and whilst we enjoyed our meal the ex-artilleryman told us how he got so much in love with a pretty Southsea girl, that he deserted, and lodged for six weeks in her parents' house, not two hundred yards from the barracks. Then at last he was denounced by another girl who was jealous, but scenting danger in the nick of time, he got away in disguise by the last train that night for Waterloo, the armed party in search of him being so convinced that he had not left the house, that they tore up the flooring of every room. Later on in Rowton House he was recognized by an old comrade and again "given away," as the latter thought. Once more, however, he scented peril, and boldly went to Portsmouth and gave himself up. After a fortnight's detention he was given his discharge in consideration of his excellent character, and reappeared in London, much to the surprise of the man who imagined he had sent him to jail.

By and by as we shifted from one part of the mighty building to another, we could not help noting again the variety of men to be met with there, where you may jostle against journalists, clerks, commercials, navvies, and a score of other types, not all these denizens of our sixpenny haven of the hard-up being in that category by any means, least of all the navvies. There was, as a matter of fact, a very distinct cubical difference between the substantial and solid repasts which the horny handed sons of toil thought nothing of tackling, and the exceedingly frugal meals patronised by the knights of the pen.

"You see yonder a tall military looking fellow," said our pilot. "He is an old Egyptian campaigner, now a commercial and a splendid hand at yarn spinning. But, by Jove! he does know how to embellish his tales! Not bad company! Knows every corner of London with a knowledge varied and peculiar. Let's see what he's reading"—our friend glided up to the other, and returned smiling. "Ye gods! It's Baron Munchausen!"

Close to this spruce veteran of the Soudan sits a far older man, grey, bent, wrinkled, and bleary eyed. You might well give a second glance his way, for he has indeed his history and a mystery to boot. This septuagenarian is a five-foot relic of "old time" Australian days, who, after years of wild seafaring life, and perhaps *wilder* experience of the "bush," has finally cast anchor in his native

parish. He is proud of the fact that the notorious bush ranger Mat Kelly was his nephew, and the old man could perhaps give some queer tales of "robbery under arms" if he chose.

Here, as at King's Cross "wrapper writing" is very much in evidence. It is, in short, a pursuit so widely followed by those who are temporarily "out of collar," that it is impossible to forbear mentioning it in this article. The grinding assiduity of the poor fellows who are driven to resort to this laborious and monotonous method of getting bread and cheese is painful to witness. Still, it affords a living, and keeps the wolf from the door, and some of the experts and "sloggers" are permanent hands. We have in fact come across individuals who have worked for nearly a score of years for that famous firm of addressing agents known familiarly as "the Smitheries of the Mark," or to the uninitiated as Smiths of Bevis Marks. And perhaps when bearing in mind what a keen struggle for existence there is going on every day in this London of ours, one can hardly wonder that some men have actually grown grey at "wrapper writing." In times of business pressure perhaps five hundred may be working for this house, which may then be regarded as a benefactor of the unemployed, although the remuneration of three shillings for writing a thousand addresses may appear a paltry and hard-earned pittance.

In one case we heard of, the son of a porter employed in carrying the firm's parcels died, and his employers promptly paid the undertaker's bill, and gave the man "something to go on with." In another instance when, on the death of a writer, a subscription was got up for his family, the firm headed the list with a "fiver." Again on the occasion of the Jubilee, the fiat went forth that every old hand was to have a bonus of five shillings, and each new comer three.

"But," remonstrated one of the subordinate managers. "Jones has only been here a day or two, and a good many have not been more than a week at work."

"What the deuce is that to you?" is said to have been the answer of the chief. "Three shillings," I said, "and three shillings let it be."

There was an unconscious paraphrase of the parable of the labourers about this, and such touches of human nature are pleasant gleams in the sad and weary world of wrapper writing.

It is the cutting-down agencies, and those who employ them, who do so much mischief in this, as in other lines; even political committees, which are generally regarded as prone to prodigality, not being found above engaging the services of some of the most notorious sweaters for filling-in their election cards. We saw, for example, a knot of poor fellows engaged at this work for the magnificent wage of two shillings and threepence a thousand! There is a certain shop of the addressing kind, the head of which has a reputation for unlimited piety and limited pay. In this religious spirit he had compassion on a hard-up man, of Christian principles. The new comer worked with such zeal and energy, that his employer gave him all his confidence, and was painfully shocked one day when he found that a consignment of thirty-thousand circulars he was expecting to arrive at his agency for addressing, had been anticipated by his faithful henchman, who had quietly gone and annexed the order all to himself and some few other Rowtonians, whom he utilised as clerks for the nonce. It is regrettable to learn that the mistaken philanthropist has become so soured that the religious young man's successor has since received the sack for staying away from business to watch by his dying wife!

It must not be supposed that this article is the outcome of a hasty survey for, thanks to our friend, philosopher, and guide, we gained sufficient insight into the workings of the establishment to make us anxious to know more, and so we boldly took a header into the surging sea of humanity, and lingered as lodgers where we had loitered as lookers on. In due course we became acquainted with some of the chess-exponents of the place, and were much impressed by contact with one who positively spends morning, noon, and night at the game to drown his troubles, just as another man would in drink. Some few years ago, he quitted the hospital where he had been sliced, cut, and jabbed, until he was left with one kidney, and repaired to the County Council Hotel. There, he had a terrible time of it, but, although so handicapped in health and pocket, he courageously pulled himself together, and, at last, secured a clerical appointment, which brought him in ultimately about £200 a year. Henceforth, he lived so economically, that he was able to invest a good deal of his earnings in purchases of shares. Now, through unforeseen contingencies, all has vanished, employment and savings

alike, and again on his beam ends, he has taken refuge in this Surrey-side haven of the hard-up, where he devotes all his spare energies to chess. Hope and energy have not happily forsaken him yet, and maybe his luck will turn again. For such plucky ones the Rowton Houses are admirably adapted, for in such places a man may, at all events, pick himself up without giving way to gloom.

Another of our chess antagonists was a curiosity of Scotch caution, which he showed in other ways, besides very deliberate calculations as to the value of an exchange, or carefully thought-out methods of tiring out his opponent. Sandy, it must be confessed, was not half a bad fellow. Indeed, in his festive moods, he was jovial, although we are afraid, that at such times, the bar saw more of his company than the board. During one of these bouts he was sorely puzzled as to how to ensure the safety of a sovereign, and took so much trouble about it, that he forget next morning where and how he had stored it in that one lucid interval. Well, three days had nearly passed, and Sandy, painfully contrite and severely sober, had given up his "quid" as a lost one, when a very old gentleman, and quite a stranger, accosted him.

"Young man," said the latter, "I have been waiting for you to get yourself again. You gave me a sovereign the other day to take care of for you. There it is."

Sandy, was, it is needless to say, at once amazed and grateful.

One of the most conversational of the miscellaneous crowd, we found ourselves amongst, was a literary cabby, who related to us the following experience :

"Two years ago, almost to this day, I was hailed near the church of St. James', Piccadilly, by a young swell, who, returning to the porch, escorted a lovely young lady to my cab, and directed me to drive to a private hotel near King's Cross. There, I received instructions to wait, and, in about half-an-hour, the gentleman came out with a Gladstone bag, and told me to take him to Euston. There, I was paid, and saw him disappear with his luggage, which was then and there labelled for Liverpool. About twelve months ago, I was driving slowly along Oxford Street, when that same young lady came out of Buszards, and, looking up, recognised me instantly. She spoke to me and asked if I remembered taking her up in Piccadilly, and whether I had seen aught of the young gentleman since. I told her I had not set eyes on him since he started for Liverpool.

"'Ah!' said she, angrily, 'he was a villain! If ever you do see him, follow him up, and then let me know about it.' With that she held out her pretty gloved hand and gave me her card and half-a-quid. I have never run across the villain, but *dum spiro spero!* As for the young lady, I would willingly drive her about for nothing. She's a real angel.'"

The story made us wish to learn what mystery lay behind these bare facts, but surmise is, of course, so far useless; and we can only re-echo our literary Jehu's wish that time will elucidate the problem. But if our cabman's yarn seemed wanting in point, and only adding one more to the long list of London's unsolved mysteries, his perspicuity was not at fault, when he promptly capped it, by giving us Jeddah as "a dead cert" for the Derby. We virtuously encouraged one another to resist the tempting tip, and an hour or so later found ourselves painful illustrations of the danger of taking a high moral stand once too often.

After such fashion, making mental notes, studying men and manners, playing chess and what not, time passed pleasantly enough at Rowton House. You might, after all, be in a worse place, for what with plenty of books, papers and games, and comfortable beds, and first-class baths, how can life, despite all its local circumstances and drawbacks, be altogether unpleasant to a man with a purpose and occupation and sound liver? It may, in all seriousness, be even asked whether a luxurious and dyspeptic individual would not find a short course of Rowtonising with a room on the topmost storey, physically and mentally beneficial. There has been wholesale misconception about these places, those who consider them as philanthropic institutions, and others who cynically dub them "dosser's places," being equally wrong. The only philanthropy about the scheme and its carrying out is that which pays five per cent., with still more glowing prospect in the future, when the sphere of operations becomes more extended, by the completion of intended buildings, and the drawing on capital for construction ceases. You see, in the sixpenny hotel, both the shady and bright side of things. To the genuine worker it offers value for his money, and a comfortable home, whilst to the earnest and energetic ones in search of work, it presents a fair chance of biding a bit till the wind changes and luck comes again. The old stagers, too, men with small annuities, pensions, or allowances, and

without encumbrances, can find therein freedom from the evils and worries which landladies and the proverbial "cat" have taught them to shun. Such men are generally crochetty, and in the Rowton Houses nobody minds them—they abound. Of course there, as elsewhere, long continued want of occupation is demoralising, but the place must not be blamed for that, despite the inevitable proportion of loafers and cadgers, whose wily ways we have touched upon. In any case, philanthropy, or no philanthropy, the development of Lord Rowton's system means the solution of more than one of the many social problems which statesmen and well-wishers to humanity have had in their minds for half a century. Such an idea worked out on a sound business basis is worth all the moral elevating proposals propounded by the whole bench of bishops or heterogenous crews of faddists fattening on the masses. It succeeds in a striking and practical way whilst the advocates of state socialism have nothing but Utopian dreams to offer to those as yet unwilling masses.

What is the effect upon an educated man of a prolonged sojourn in Rowton House? This is a question we have been frequently asked, and we can only say that poverty and uncertainty whether there, or elsewhere, is deteriorating and demoralising. Repulsed, rebuffed, and thwarted in all his efforts to obtain a foothold in the universe, life becomes to the struggler a comedy, and himself the chief comedian, whose antics and absurdities amuse none so much as they do himself. Poverty ceases to be a terror or even a burden. It is like himself, one of the grotesque incidents of the play. His old coat, dirty linen, and hang-dog appearance, do not appal him as they might have done in days gone by; for are they too not in keeping with his environment and with himself? What matters it to anyone, least of all to himself, a nobody, how he looks, or what he wears? He laughs aloud at the idea, and if the grating sound of his voice tells him that he does not believe this and recalls past years, when, with the giddy and splendid hopefulness of youth, he planned with no thought of failure to vault into the saddle of the universe and mount to heights yet unexplored, by all who were before him, a glance at the clock dispels the illusion, and the picture passes like a vision of the night. It is approaching the fateful hour of nine p.m., and the magic "tanner" is not made up or, if mayhap he has, with some foresight, and God only knows what self-restraint, ensured his lodging for a week, even then hunger may be gnawing his vitals. To such

bathos do we come! Ambition shattered into fragments when struck by such stoney realities as this. No wonder that energies are wasted and lives thrown away, and that men feeling themselves to be walled in by a relentless destiny, glide into grooves of gloomy apathy and mental stagnation until they become mere shells upon the shores of the ocean of life.

Songs of Angels.

Hark! a sound of music stealing
 O'er the starlit earth and sea,
 Like a chime of far bells pealing,
 Floating into harmony:
 Strains so sweet that swelling ocean
 Stays enchanted 'neath their spell,
 Night winds list in gentler motion,
 What those mystic voices tell.

Yes—

Yes,—They are songs of angels winging
 O'er a world by cares oppressed,
 To the weary-hearted singing
 "Rest! Peace! and Rest!"

Hush! a mournful strain more tender
 Wanders through the silent night,
 True white stars their homage render
 With a paler, purer light,
 While above a sinful city,
 Where poor mortals pray in pain,
 Words and tears of love and pity
 Seem to blend in sweet refrain.

Yes—

Yes,—They are songs of angels, winging
 'Mid the shine from stars above,
 To the sorrowful-hearted singing
 "Love! pitying Love!"

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G. HUBI NEWCOMBE.

Matrimony.

By Rev. J. HUDSON, M.A.

CHAPTER I.

MATRIMONY.—A gentleman of high family and connections, exceedingly good looking, very clever, and possessed of ample means, will be glad to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. She must be extremely handsome, docile and domestic, and highly accomplished. Write in confidence, giving address and enclosing photo, to A.B., 204 Tottenham-court-road, London.

"Well! I *do* call that the most amusing piece of impertinence I ever heard of. What are men coming to now-a-days, I wonder?" said the elder of two ladies to her companion at the breakfast table, throwing down *The Daily Intelligence*, which contained the above matrimonial advertisement. "Just read that, Kitty, and tell me what you think of it."

Kitty read "the piece of impertinence," with an amused smile.

Catherine Trevellyan was an exceedingly pretty girl of nineteen summers; *petite*, very fair, with deep blue eyes, and a profusion of golden hair that would have made the fortune of any proprietor of a patent hair-wash, if he could have induced her to attribute her wealth of sunny curls to the magic properties of his specific.

Having been early left an orphan, she had been adopted by her mother's brother, and brought up with her cousins at their delightful country seat in Hertfordshire.

She had just come up to town with her eldest cousin, Violet Sinclair, a girl some three or four years older than herself, to see the Academy, and they were both staying a couple of nights with their old German governess in Russell Square, who was kind enough to chaperone them when they required it, but being tolerably independent young people, they managed to look after themselves pretty well.

"Well, I call that too rich for anything, Vi," said Kitty to her cousin, after perusing the paragraph, "I should dearly like to see the author of it, if only to satisfy my curiosity. He ought to be preserved as a

specimen of nineteenth-century unromantic, matter-of-fact marriage-making, stuffed and put under a glass case in the British Museum labelled 'this is the exceedingly good-looking and very clever A. B. referred to in *The Daily Intelligence* of ——— A.D., 1897.' Now can't we manage to get a glimpse of this extraordinary personage somehow? I'm quite consumed with curiosity! It could be managed quite easily without our identity ever being known. The thing's as simple as daylight. You see one of us has only to answer the advertisement, which can be done under an assumed name, we can send a photo of some stage beauty as unlike either of us possible, ask for his photo in return, fix some public place for a meeting where we can recognise him without being known, gaze upon his 'exceedingly good-looking' features (which I suspect will be exceedingly commonplace) and enjoy his chagrin to our hearts' content. It will be quite an adventure," wound up merry Kitty, who had become quite excited over the imaginary success of her proposed plot.

Violet demurred to the proposal, and thought it was hardly a scheme that would commend itself to the approval of her parents. But opposition only served to whet Kitty's appetite for fun, and at last her cousin reluctantly gave in, though somewhat consoled by the reflection that it was exceedingly unlikely that anyone but themselves would ever know anything about the affair.

The upshot of the matter was, that by that night's post, Kitty wrote a short note to A. B. at the address given, enclosing the portrait of a very tall, dark, handsome girl, a former schoolfellow, who had since married an officer and gone out to India. She signed the letter, Evelyn North, to give a greater air of genuineness to the epistle than mere initials, and asked for a reply to be addressed to a certain post-office, fixing a day and hour for meeting. Having consigned this to the letter-box, not without some inward misgivings at her own audacity, Kitty had nothing to do but await the development of events.

CHAPTER II.

LET us go back a little to the origin of the advertisement, and see how these things had come about. A few days previous to the events of the last chapter, a party of medical students were gathered together in one of the dissecting-rooms of St. Bartholomew's

Hospital. It was near the end of the session, consequently the attendance at lectures was daily diminishing, and those who did put in an appearance, were all in the highest spirits, smoking and cracking jokes, and discussing their plans for the vacation, rather than attending to their physiological or anatomical studies.

"Seen Buchanan to-day?" presently enquired one of them.

"Yes," said the man accosted, "he's gone up the river for a good blow, says he's been rather overworking himself lately."

"Poor old fellow," said another, "I thought he looked rather seedy lately, and I told him he'd been reading too hard; I tell you what, you fellows, I really think it's time we stopped plaguing him with our practical jokes, he's a downright good sort of a chap and no mistake, no one else would have stood our chaffing half so good-naturedly, I vote that we drop it."

Argyll Buchanan, the man referred to, or "old Buck," as he was more familiarly known, had only been one session at St. Bartholomew's, and was somewhat older than most of his fellow-students. He was the son of a Scotch Laird, at one time a wealthy man, but a series of reverses had reduced his means, and made it necessary that his son Argyll should enter some profession, instead of looking forward to an easy life on the patrimonial estate as he had been brought up to expect. Having always had a taste for medicine, he had entered St. Bartholomew's with a view to qualifying as a doctor. He was a typical Scotchman, with a strong Highland accent, and a massive well-built frame. He was exceedingly good-natured, and his frank blue eyes were full of fun. For some reason the class had chosen to make him the butt of all their practical jokes, to which he fell rather an easy prey owing to his natural simplicity, and inexperience of the world. He had, however, been very good-humoured about them, and joined in the laugh against himself, and in consequence of this and his sterling good qualities, was rapidly becoming very popular with his companions. The proposal for the discontinuance of such pranks had hardly been made, when a fresh arrival entered the room, an unpleasant sinister-looking man, by name, Moxon.

"Oh, I say, you fellows," he began, "I've arranged such a splendid lark at the expense of Old Buck, a regular stunner that'll throw all our other jokes into the shade. You know how shy he always is in the presence of the fair sex. Wel a few days ago, I

inserted in the columns of *The Daily Intelligence*, a high-flown advertisement to the effect that the advertiser, who was handsome, rich, and endowed with every other desirable qualification was anxious to make the acquaintance of a pretty and accomplished girl with a view to matrimony. All applicants were to send their photographs, and address their letters to A.B., 204, Tottenham Court Road—that's the shop of my tobacconist who takes in letters. My glowing offer met with an immediate response from a certain maiden who described herself as everything that was desired, tall, dark, and highly accomplished, and enclosed me her photograph, which is certainly very fetching, and finally asked me where and when I could meet her in London. Her name is Miss E. North, and she wrote from a post-office in the Strand. She also asked for the advertiser's photograph, so I at once sent her old Buck's (the one he had taken in Edinburgh, and of which he gave us each a copy) and promised to write to-night and arrange a place of meeting. So now I've only got to contrive some plan to get Buchanan to meet the lady: she will recognise him by the photograph I have sent, probably address him with alacrity, and poor old Buck will flush up to the roots of his hair, and nearly sink into the earth with confusion. What explanation they will come to, I don't know; but don't you think it will be a splendid joke?"

There was silence for a moment; no one liked Moxon, and they were all beginning to be fond of Buchanan. At last one of them spoke out:

"No, I don't, Moxon; I tell you straight, I think it's a dirty trick, and I wouldn't have a finger in it myself."

"Oh come now," said Moxon, "you've all had your fingers in many other little hoaxes of a similar nature."

"Well, I'm not going to have a finger in any more, as far as Buchanan is concerned," replied the other, "and I don't think any of the others are either."

"Ah, well! I've no time to argue about it now, so ta-ta for the present."

It is probable that one or other of the men would have warned Buchanan of the plot, in which case this story would never have been written; but it being the end of term they were all busy packing up, paying bills, and making farewell calls, consequently the matter passed clean out of their minds, and they thought no

more about it. Not so Moxon. He called upon Buchanan that night in his diggings, and found him just finishing his tea after his day's row on the river. After a little desultory conversation he said, "I'm off into the country to-morrow, I suppose you'll be stopping up in town to grind a bit longer, won't you, old man?"

"I'm afraid so," replied Buchanan, "though I hope to get a few days at Margate later on."

"Well, I wonder if you would mind doing me a great favour; I should be awfully obliged. You see, I promised to meet a young lady-cousin of mine to-morrow, and take her to the Academy. Now, I've had a telegram begging me to join a fishing party on Loch Leven, and I wouldn't miss the sport for anything. I was to meet her at Euston at two o'clock, but I leave St. Pancras by the ten a.m. Scotch Express. The mischief is I can't let the poor child know my change of plans, as she's out of town to-day at some friends whose address I don't know, and won't be back till to-morrow just in time to keep the appointment. Now I can't let the poor thing stand about waiting and wondering what's become of me. So do you mind meeting her for me? Her name's Miss Evelyn North, and that you may have no difficulty, I've brought you her photograph. Now will this be putting too much on a willing horse?"

Buchanan was not altogether entranced at the prospect; as has been said, he was very shy in the presence of ladies, and he could not help thinking it rather selfish of a man to break an engagement with a lady so as to get a few hours sooner to the scene of his own pleasures; moreover, it struck him as a little odd that Moxon, who was to have escorted his cousin alone about London should be so much in the dark about her whereabouts as to be unable to communicate with her by post or telegram. However, he concealed his thoughts beneath his usual good-natured smile, and said, "I shall be very pleased if I can be of any service to you."

"Thanks, awfully: well, remember Euston, arrival platform, at two o'clock. Goodbye, and a pleasant 'vac'!"

Moxon, elated at the success of his plan, immediately wrote a note to Miss North that A.B. would meet her at Euston Station at two o'clock the next day, and she must be on the look-out for him without fail.

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning Violet awoke with such a splitting headache that it was quite impossible for her to accompany her cousin on her wild goose chase. Kitty felt half inclined to abandon the idea altogether, in which case again this tale would never have been written. But her natural determination never to give up anything which she had once undertaken, and a lingering hankering for just one good look at such a curious specimen of the male sex, as she was sure this man must be, decided her to carry out her original plan.

Without taking her old governess into her confidence, she managed to arrange for an early lunch, and that their walk afterwards should be in the direction of Euston Square. First the excuse of buying a magazine at the railway book-stall, and then an expressed wish to see the train come in from the North, brought them to the appointed rendezvous a few minutes before the hour agreed upon. Exactly as the clock struck two, Buchanan hurried up the platform, looking anxiously about him. There were not many people about, and certainly no one in the least resembling Mr. Moxon's cousin.

There was a young lady, with what looked like a German *Fraulein*, but she wasn't at all like the photograph. They were walking up and down the platform like Buchanan, and every time they passed him, the younger of the two seemed to regard him with an amused smile, which appeared to increase with each fresh inspection; indeed, she fixed upon him such derisive stares that Buchanan began to think his collar must have come off, or his face be smeared with smuts. The next time they passed, the girl still staring at him as before, and not sufficiently looking where she went, stepped too near to the edge of the platform, and in a second had fallen heavily across the lines, striking her head against the further metal.

A train was just coming in, but there was no real danger from that, as the driver easily pulled up in time. Nevertheless, it seemed to the bystanders as if Buchanan had saved her from an awful death; for leaping quickly on to the line in less time than it takes to tell, he lifted her in his strong arms on to the platform, and carried her at once into a waiting-room. A doctor was soon in attendance, who

found his patient suffering from a severe shock and with a very nasty cut on the temple, which had rendered her quite unconscious; he hoped, however, that no serious mischief need be apprehended, but that a few days quiet would set her up again.

A cab was sent for, and in the meanwhile the Fraulein thanked Buchanan with great volubility, and in very bad English, for his heroism, calling him their good defender, and their brave deliverer, much to the young man's embarrassment, who pooh-poohed the idea of his having done anything worthy of mention. She persisted, however, in giving him their address in Russell Square, and begged that he would call upon Mademoiselle Trevellyan, who, she was sure, would desire to thank him herself as soon as ever she was well enough to receive him. In response to her inquiries he gave her his own name and address. After seeing them safely off in a cab, there being still no signs of the faithless cousin, he hailed a hansom for himself and drove off to his lodgings.

CHAPTER IV.

POOR Kitty was seriously ill for several days, and it was some time longer before she was able to be removed home.

Mr. Sinclair had come up to London immediately on being informed of what had happened. After hearing the details of the accident (it did not occur to him to ask how they came to be at Euston Station), he, at once set out for Buchanan's rooms to thank him most warmly for the timely assistance he had rendered to his niece. He fortunately found him in, and at once took a great liking to the simple, honest-hearted fellow. Gathering from him that he was rather dull during the vacation when all his chums went away, and that his studies were his only amusement, he gave him a cordial invitation to spend a fortnight at his manor in Hertfordshire, assuring him that there was plenty of fishing and shooting. Buchanan, being really glad of a change and a keen sportsman to boot, gladly accepted; and has always since maintained that it was the happiest fortnight of his life. He very soon became a general favourite. At first it struck him that Kitty appeared to treat him with considerable reserve, if not disdain; but as time went on, and she had ample opportunities of observing his sterling good qualities,

it seemed to wear away and give place to a sincere regard. Still there were times when he caught her looking at him with a critical and somewhat disparaging gaze. As for himself he was simply head over ears in love with her, and one day when she had seemed particularly happy in his society, he ventured to reveal something of his affection for her.

"But I sometimes fancy, dear Miss Trevellyan, that there is something about me that does not find favour in your eyes, you positively seem to shrink from me at times. Won't you tell me what it is dear that I may correct it if possible? for indeed I love you better than anyone in the world." Thus adjured Kitty did the only straightforward thing.

"Indeed I have learned to like you very much indeed, as we all do, and I think I love you but if you must have the truth, I can't imagine how a man such as I find you to be—good, tender and true—could have ever stooped to put such an advertisement as that in *The Daily Intelligence*."

Buchanan simply stared with astonishment, and Kitty went on: "I know I am very much to blame for the silly part I took in the matter—I did it simply as a joke, but I cannot think your action at all excusable."

"My dearest girl whatever do you mean? I haven't the slightest idea what you are talking about!"

"O come now, Mr. Buchanan, it's no use denying it. Do you mean to say you didn't put this advertisement in the paper?" and so saying, she took from her purse a newspaper cutting containing the paragraph that appears at the heading of this story, and handed it to him.

Buchanan read it in amazement. "Never saw it till this very moment, I pledge you my word of honour."

"And you never wrote these?" continued Kitty, showing him the two letters from A. B. to Miss Evelyn North.

"Of course not, not a syllable of them."

"Well at least you must acknowledge that this is your photograph, why I recognized you by it the moment you came upon the platform," said poor Kitty, beginning to blush again at the thought of that humiliating scene.

"Why, bless my soul," replied Buchanan, "that's my photo right

enough ; but where on earth did you get that from ? I can't imagine for the life of me."

"When I read that advertisement, you must know that I felt a perfect yearning to set my eyes on the man who could be such a conceited snob as to pen such an advertisement as that ; and so I replied to it from a post-office in the Strand, and signed myself ' Evelyn North '. I also sent the photograph of a quondam schoolfellow, and the next day I received your photograph, and the invitation to meet the writer at Euston. With the Fraulein as my companion I felt pretty safe, for you couldn't mistake me for the lady of the portrait. I could hardly contain my amusement when I saw you pacing the platform awaiting your fair correspondent. Did you notice me laughing I wonder ? What happened after that you know. But, you dear old fellow, for of course I believe every word you say, if you didn't go to the station to meet me, what took you there at that hour ? "

Buchanan began to smell a rat : " I think I have been hoaxed by some of my fellow-students: the fact is I went there on an errand for one of the men at St. Bartholomew's, named Moxon."

"What ! Harry Moxon, a dark-looking man with ferrety eyes that can never look you straight in the face ? "

"I daresay that description would suit him pretty well, but do you know him ? "

"I am sorry to say I have met him ; my uncle knows some of his relations, and invited him to spend last Christmas here ; he seemed to like me very much, while I simply loathed him ; he was to have come again next Christmas, but uncle has heard something disreputable about him since, and won't have him near the house again. You'll have to come instead ? "

"Indeed I will. Well you see I went at his request to meet his cousin and give her a message, but I see now it was all a mean underhand fraud."

"But how were you to know his cousin ? " said Kitty.

"He gave me her photograph so that I might recognize her."

"Was it that of a large-eyed girl in a riding habit, about a head taller than myself ? "

"The same," said Buchanan.

"Then of course, my dearest Argyll, that settles it, for that was the photo I sent A. B. You'll have to settle next term with Mr.

Moxon. For myself I hope I shall never see him again. Well we've both been fairly sold, but it doesn't matter a bit as it brought us together; it's been a regular 'Comedy of Errors,' but 'all's well that ends well,' isn't it?"

Buchanan's answer was a kiss. Mr. Sinclair gave a hearty assent to their engagement, and it was arranged that as soon as ever the young doctor had got a fairly good practice they should be married.

CHAPTER V.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S is waking up again after the stagnation of the "Vac."

Buchanan, in the highest of health and spirits, is entertaining a few of his special chums at supper, and they have been spending a thoroughly jolly evening.

The Scotchman has just been telling them the tale of his engagement, and how his fiancée is everything that is sweet and loveable, and what a very lucky chap he is to have won such an angel.

He has hardly exhausted the list of her virtues, when a rap at the door is instantly followed by the entrance of Moxon.

A cloud gathers on Buchanan's face, but Moxon goes on unabashed.

"Well, old fellows, how are you all? Hope you had as jolly a vac as I've had—we had no end of sport up North; and how are you Buck? Meet my cousin all right, eh?"

Buchanan did not answer, but a firm look of uncompromising severity comes over his face as he looks steadily at his interrogator. Moxon has never seen that look before, and what is more, he doesn't like it; but he proceeds in as light-hearted tones as he can assume—"I say did you console the fair damsel in my absence?"

"Now look here, I don't want to have a scene, but I just tell you once for all, that I have found out all about your plot, and a mean, ungentlemanly trick it was; however, it was a signal failure, and what is more, it is through your silly hoax that I have become engaged to the sweetest girl in all England."

"Oh, then, you needn't look so sulky over an innocent little joke; however, I congratulate you, and hope you'll ask me to be best man, and introduce me to your little charmer."

"There is no need to do that," said Buchanan, "as she has already had the misfortune to make your acquaintance; you will understand everything when I merely tell you that the name of my future wife is Miss Catherine Trevellyan."

"Good God!" exclaimed Moxon, turning as white as a sheet, "My Kitty, the girl I met last Christmas in Hertfordshire, the girl I've dreamed of ever since, for whom I'd lose my soul if I could only call her mine, and next Christmas I hoped to do so." Then turning to Buchanan in a fit of ungovernable fury he roared—"Mean, sneaking hound to steal away my sweetheart."

"She would never have cared for you in any case," quietly rejoined Buchanan, "I have her own word for it, and you may take mine, that we neither of us desire to number you for the future amongst our acquaintances."

There is little more to add. In a very short time Argyll and Kitty, who had met under such strange auspices, were united together in the bonds of holy matrimony, and it is needless to add the fairy-book *finale* that they lived happily ever afterwards. As for Moxon, he discovered to his cost that practical jokes sometimes recoil with most unexpectedly disastrous consequences on the perpetrator's head.

A Cyclist Saga.

Swift record-breaker !
Speeding in road dust,
Speeding in sunshine,
Glittering and gleaming,
Watch we thy whirling wheel,
Distance-devouring,
Fly, as the lightning flies,
Out of the night.

Golden the cornfields,
Waving in ripeness ;
Golden the beechwoods,
Turning to splendour ;
Golden the bracken,
Where hold the deep wood-hollows,
Leaf-broken sun-rays,
Bird-broken silence ;
Hamlet where humble lives,
True tales may tell thee ;
God's house, by pious hands,
(Time-defying, stately,)
Reared in the past-day ;
Wandering waters,
Clouds in the high blue,
Wildflower and fern frond—
Thou hast not seen them.

Wide swept the village green,
Up to the house-doors ;
Sound slept the village geese,
White on the roadway.
Slack now thy cruel pace,
Bent-backed and bold one ;
Many the miles thou
Hast measured since morn !

Corner, sharp turning,
He slacks not, he stays not,
Down to the sleeping flock,
Fear-spreading, rides he.
Loud rose the goose-shriek,
Long rose the clamour,
Low on the green sward
Bike-mingled he lay ;
Cackling and screaming,
Forth fled the white geese.
Rising, round-gazing,
There at its last gasp,
He saw one that fled not.

Came, then, the village wife,
Shrill in her anger,
"She, the all-mother was,
"Plumpest and wisest ;
"Staff of my old age,
"Slain by thy rashness,
"So shalt thou buy her."

See, round the winter fire,
Seated the heroes,
Telling of tyre and brake,
Humber or Swift ;
Telling of cunning coast,
Telling of splendid spurt.
Low laughs a silent one :
"Great had my glory been,
"Fastest of riders !
"But hear the Norn's decree,
"Stern-toned and changeless,
"Thus shall *thy* record stand,
"Stopped by a goose !"

MARY FREEMAN.

An Undesirable Quality.

By VIOLET WOOD.

CHAPTER I.

COLONEL COLVILLE drove his cabriolet slowly out of Bloomsbury Square. Behind him stood a smart tiger in sober livery, the horse, though of long pedigree and exceptional blood, was sober too, but the Colonel himself exceeded both in sobriety. By nature and habit he was grave; he seldom smiled, he talked in dry and measured accents, but his tone proclaimed one accustomed to be heard and obeyed. The best years of his life had been spent in active service in Asia, and perhaps events there had helped to sober him. He drew out his watch, a respectable solid gold time-keeper, and calculated the exact speed that would be necessary to reach his destination at the required hour.

The Colonel was going out to dinner. Punctuality was his soldierly characteristic, so an hour later on this summer evening, in the year of our Lord, 1843, he drove slowly up the broad Clapham Road, beautiful with its abundance of leafy trees, past bean and cornfields, hospitable inns and comfortable houses, the happy homes of city merchants who flourished in this delightful suburb. A new church had been erected since last he had passed that way, and he regarded it disapprovingly, thinking that it resembled an engraving he had at home of the Temple of Bacchus more than the usual style of building set apart for the worship of God.

Clapham—home of wealth, respectability and godly reformers, the very name is associated with palatial residences, the noble erections of Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren. Clapham—where for centuries the Thorntons had with princely munificence supported every good work at home and abroad, where they had entertained royalty, and fought with their neighbours, Wilberforce, Lord Teignmouth, and Granville Sharp, against the horrors of the Slave trade.

Perhaps the Colonel thought of these things as he turned into the broad carriage sweep of a mansion facing Clapham Common. A magnificent cedar overshadowed him, but trees were magnificent at

Clapham then, so this one escaped the Colonel's praise. He entered a hall more spacious than many ball rooms, and was taken by a footman in plush, adorned with gold epaulettes to the drawing-room, where he quietly observed to his hostess as they shook hands, that it was still warm.

They had not Jubilees to talk about in those days, and the coronation of the young Queen was a thing of the past, but the conversation turned to the royal infants, the Duke, Lord Melbourne, and Sir Robert Peel; and the guests assembled for dinner at the residence of James Stannard, of Stannard House, Clapham Common, in the county of Surrey, Esq., shook their heads solemnly over the popery of the Tractarians, and talked of many great movements then in their infancy, while seated round the solid mahogany table.

The Colonel, though not a man of anecdote, had many personal reminiscences to relate. One tiger story most of his intimate friends knew well; his language never varied so they knew when to be eager, excited, and amused; there was one story too that he never omitted telling, how the night before his first engagement he had been too nervous to sleep. He prided himself upon telling of his fear with a pride that perhaps a little aped humility.

The drawing-room was decorated with hot-house flowers cut from Mr. Stannard's extensive conservatories, and the large French windows were open to allow the cool air to steal in, a welcome visitor, and mingle with the heavy perfume. At dessert—the room sweet with the scent of pineapples grown in Mr. Stannard's pineries, the damask cloth removed from the brilliantly polished mahogany, and the wax candles lighted in their solid silver candlesticks—the gentlemen drank their good but heavy port, and the children came in.

As a bachelor the Colonel did not care for children; girls especially were uninteresting; for them there was no distinguished future, no achievable possibility; no brilliant career; and, consequently, in his opinion, no—present—women were necessary in the world as wives and mothers (he did not add "nurses"—there had been no Crimea and Florence Nightingale then).

When Mr. Stannard said "My little girl Rosamond, Colonel," his attention was engaged by Master William Stannard, who was standing shyly by his father sipping a little port wine from his glass. The boy

being one of the male sex for whom there were distinguished futures, was of a trifle more interest in his eyes.

He turned his head in obedience to his hostess' words, and looked down at a fair pretty little girl by his side, who glanced timidly up at him in return. She was dressed wholly in white, her golden curls and large blue eyes giving the only colour to what the Colonel acknowledged made a charming little picture. He cut her up a slice of pineapple, saying :

"So your name's Rosamond, hey, and how old are you?"

The answer "six" was shyly but distinctly given, and while she ate her pineapple the Colonel continued his conversation about "John Company," leaving the children to eat and listen in peace. At this juncture it happened that a large moth, attracted by the many lights, left the security of the garden and entered the dining-room unbidden. Round and round the enticing flame it buzzed, and finally maddened by love or some other strange all-absorbing passion, flew straight through it to fall scorched and burnt upon the table.

"Mamma, dear," said a little voice, "will you kill that poor butterfly: it is so hurt?"

"And stain the table, Rosamond? certainly not," came the answer. A pink flush suffused the fair pretty face, and for one moment the child's eyes were riveted as by some strange fascination upon the writhing insect. Colonel Colville watched the colour fade away, while a look of fixed resolution came over her face in its stead, an expression of steady resolute purpose seldom seen upon the countenance of the young. The sensitive lips quivered, then were firmly compressed. He watched her stretch forth one tiny trembling hand, and though shrinking in every limb, boldly seize the dreadful creature, the terrible buzzing winged thing, with its big soft body, and crunch it to death in her fingers, turning white to the very lips as she did so, making the Colonel fear she must either be ill or faint away.

"By gad what pluck!" said the Colonel to himself, "pity she isn't a boy to go to Addiscombe; pluck is such an unnecessary and undesirable quality in a woman."

CHAPTER II.

MASTER William and Miss Rosamond Stannard lived as most children of rich parents did in those days. Every fine afternoon they went with the nurse on the common and played by little rippling streams and tried to catch tiny fish with their hands. The Mount Pond was the home of Robinson Crusoe, the furze bushes comprised a jungle wherein lurked lions and tigers innumerable, behind the trunks of mighty chestnuts they hid for hide-and-seek, and chased each other round the elms. The common in its wild loveliness was to them of all earthly places the most beautiful. I wonder what they would say to it now? In all their fanciful games and childish concoctions a prominent place was always awarded to that mysterious and important personage Mr. "John Company," whose name they so often heard, but whose face they had never yet seen. They had vague ideas that this great gentleman who lived in Leadenhall Street controlled in some marvellous way the destinies of thousands, perhaps their own among the number; that he might if he liked take away some of Papa's money. That this strange gentleman had many soldiers they knew, and in warlike games it sometimes amounted to blows in earnest, as to who was to be on his side, and who fight against him.

Nurse met other equally respectable nurses with whom to sit and talk, while the children met equally well-dressed, well-behaved boys and girls with whom they might play. William sailed a boat, a pastime in which Rosamond was not allowed an equal share, ships not being girls' playthings. They walked across the common on fine Sunday mornings, and drove on wet ones to the bare ugly parish church, where they listened attentively to what neither understood, and gazed at the absurd painted window made memorable by the affectionate regard of Lord Macaulay. In the afternoon they walked in their garden, watching the proud peacock strutting on the greensward, and feeding the pretty goldfish in the basin of the fountains.

There were few books for children in those days, but they knew Miss Edgeworth by heart; and comparatively few games. William was obliged to have a companion for trap, bat and ball, so Rosamond's sex was set aside for her brother's pleasure, and they played *la grace* and battledore and shuttlecock on their velvet lawn, and corinella indoors. Their father and his friends played bowls on the

bowling-green, and the children liked to roll about these heavy strangely shaped balls, and make them run races as horses did at Epsom.

Then William went to school and Rosamond was condemned to learn the use of the globes, cyphering, and Lindley Murray, alone, she fell often into disgrace for not confining her calisthenics to the back-board and dumbbells, instead of climbing mulberry trees and throwing up sticks at the walnuts; but there were lovely drives with mamma in Hyde Park to see the Queen and young Prince of Wales, and garden parties at the Thornton's to make compensation. She learnt all that was deemed necessary for a young lady's education—all but what she herself wanted to know. She wanted to be told the meaning of the pictures in that funny weekly paper called *Punch*, and asked her governess who were "Pam" and "Johnny," and other questions about subjects of which she heard fragments, questions that the governess probably could not and certainly would not answer, for Mr. Stannard held that cleverness or advanced knowledge was a defect in woman, a blemish, if possessed, to be carefully concealed; men hated blue stockings, and to be married to a man who desired a nonentity for his wife ought naturally to be the aim of every woman's life; so Rosamond's brain was judiciously and systematically cramped, and the cravings of a naturally intelligent mind suppressed. She herself had an idea that she could find a key to all her puzzles in papa's paper, *The Times*, but its large sheets she was never allowed to turn. Since enquiries met with stern rebuke she left off enquiring, and took interest in lesser matters.

Childhood was over at last, the childhood of surreptitious games of knucklebones and marbles; she dined late, and much attention was given to her dancing; she went with William to such delightful dances, and they gave a lovely one at Stannard House, when she floated round their grand ballroom in her partner's arms to the music of Weippert's band. She walked with the same partner by day under the walnut trees; together they fed the goldfish while the musical fountains flung aloft their sparkling sprays; together—but they were always together, and so it came to pass that at eighteen Miss Rosamond Stannard became engaged to Captain Lionel Delaine, and marriage must shortly follow in order that he and his wife might proceed at once to India.

His girl, or rather child-wife to be—for a veritable child she was

in all worldly knowledge—knew literally nothing of the ways of men. Captain Delaine was her first love, he was so handsome, so fascinating, and she was so much in love, and so very happy.

Colonel Colville did not, as I have before mentioned, care for girls, but perhaps because he was an old friend of the family, or perchance for some other reason, he sent Rosamond a magnificent brooch—a butterfly composed of diamonds.

It was a grand wedding, and Rosamond stood trembling in the chancel of the ugly church uttering the responses in a scarcely audible voice. A line of well appointed carriages took the guests to Stannard House, while the rooks cawed hoarsely above.

Rosamond had to express her thanks to Colonel Colville verbally to-day, and in return she received from him some strange words of advice.

"My dear," he said, in his slow dry way, "you are going to a new land to dwell among strangers, where you must of necessity be often absent from your husband, remember then these two things: keep your own council among women, and make no confidential friend of any man." He said no more, but Rosamond could almost have fancied there were tears in his eyes when he wished her good-bye, had tears been even possible in such a man, and on such a day—the happiest in all her life.

Look well, Rosamond, before you leave Clapham, at the homes of beauty and splendour that surround you; look at your velvet lawns, your park-like grounds; look at the wild and pretty common, the playground of your childhood; spare a glance as you drive away in your father's carriage for the bare and ugly church. Look well, for you will never see one of them again!

CHAPTER III.

It took longer to reach India in those days, and Rosamond suffered acute agonies from sea sickness. Captain Delaine was a little weary of his wife's society before they reached their station. He had married her for her prettiness, and owing to the voyage she had not looked pretty; even now she was fatigued with hard travelling and not looking her best. Before long he discovered how insufferably dull it was for a man to be with no society but a pretty young wife.

She was fearfully ignorant, "knew nothing," as he half angrily declared, and her naive remarks made before his friends annoyed him. He could not say his wife "gave him away," that term not being then in vogue, but he used the equivalent. She was no companion for him, and India is not the place to produce patient instructors. She had no conversational powers, and their dinners were dull. Rosamond herself was overpowered by the strangeness of the country, oppressed by loneliness and agonizing home-sickness. Each place seemed fraught with new horrors; she lived in daily mortal terror of snakes and tarantula spiders, and would wake from nightmare dreaming that a cobra was standing erect at the foot of her bed ready to strike her with its awful tongue, and perspiration would stream from every pore. In her terror she would displace the mosquito nets and get stung, which did not improve her appearance as her husband told her; and the heat, oh! the awful heat! she could only describe it by saying that in the dry season they baked, and in the wet season they stewed. There were dry days when scorching winds spread sand about broadcast, reminding her of the lesson she had learnt in her schoolroom of the sensible camel who buries his head while the torrent passes over him; there were wet days when the atmosphere was heavy like a November fog, when they were attacked by prickly heat, and frogs appeared in hundreds, and she thought of the plagues of Egypt. Pluck, that undesirable quality in woman, had deserted her here; she ought to have been a man's beau ideal, pretty, timid, helpless and ignorant, and her husband, lover no longer, merely sneered. Women were scarce in India then, but Lionel neglected her for the few there were; she had not known it was possible for a man to be married to one woman and belong to another, a proof that her education had been neglected; but she soon learnt that Mrs. Hamborough claimed Captain Delaine as her property, and refused to return him to his rightful owner. She discovered how badly it was possible for a man to swear and drink, away from his own country, all facts of which she had hitherto been entirely innocent. She had never read a novel at home, even Dickens had been tabooed; she knew of no traps to lay to catch her husband's affections; she knew of no wiles to defeat Mrs. Hamboroughs, her only weapons were tears, and they failed. Mrs. Hamborough told Lionel he was thrown away, and he agreed: this thought, together with the heat and many "pegs," made him irritable: and Rosamond wept afresh.

Other men pitied her and paid her attention, some so much that they frightened her terribly. The doctor was especially kind. After the day when he killed the deadly little brown karait, whose tail Rosamond had seen wriggle, he brought her a small sword which he assured her would effectually settle any reptile. He related to her many sporting adventures of his own, and vainly tried to rouse her with a desire to emulate them.

Then Rosamond's baby was born, a child's child who showed its sense by instantly dying, and Rosamond was grateful enough to tend her thanks to God for that mercy. She would have been more grateful had they laid her beside it in that wild neglected cemetery.

The doctor said her nervous system was upset, and he ordered her away; she went and had the advantage of being able to sob herself to sleep every night in peace. She made little progress, and had fever which was not becoming, and the pretty pink colour had long faded away from her cheeks.

Lionel was always out shooting, pig-sticking, or at cricket: she might not share these amusements now, any more than she had been allowed to accompany her father and brother when they went fishing in the Wandle. Alone, the horror of her surroundings increased, she looked cautiously over her shoulder at every step; worst of all she grew frightened, horribly frightened of the barefooted, silent, stealthy table servant, who stood behind her husband's chair at dinner; his bearer also caused her alarm, and they were fully aware of her fright. Her imagination was unhappily keen and vivid: if these uncanny turbaned men disliked her, what easier, with venomous snakes around, to secret one in her room! It was a morbid thought and it clung to her, till one day, shaking with terror, she confided this new fear to her husband, who, as might be expected, laughed the idea to scorn. A few nights later, when too many "pegs" had taken effect, he recurred to it again, loudly ridiculing it in a bungalow, whose very walls had ears. With scarcely veiled anxiety she looked next morning into the servant's faces, but could learn nothing from their impassive countenances.

The kindhearted doctor was Rosamond's sole friend; he thought her a silly, weakminded little fool, but that was the fault of her education. He was sorry for her and he despised Mrs. Hamborough for what he deemed her unsportsmanlike behaviour, a battle with one like Rosamond was such pitiable warfare. Being sorry for her he brought her a puppy as a present. Good doctor, he never knew half the joy that

ridiculous, unformed, shambling creature gave to his young patient; it was something to nurse, kiss, and love; something to return her caresses and interest her mind; she regarded him, too, in the light of a protector after he had rushed across the room in hot pursuit of some, to Rosamond, invisible creature, and had stood valiantly barking and dancing round a footstool, under which the bearer found a scorpion hidden. Rosamond took the dog in her arms, kissing it passionately, and calling it her own, dear little protector. Some days later, the dog was missing, and rewards were powerless to recover it, some cheetah or hyæna, prowling around the verandah, must have carried it off. Rosamond did not cry, at least openly; she said very little; it was Captain Delaine who talked, and offered the high reward: the servants heard none of their mistress's lamentations; her wisdom here probably exceeded any her husband would have credited her with; she never expressed any suspicions she may have had, but refused with astonishing firmness to have another dog.

Captain Delaine was going on a tiger shooting expedition and Rosamond begged to be allowed to accompany him; she never thought of asking him not to go, only to be allowed to go as well. She did not gain what she desired, which was, perhaps, natural, so was left at home with the promise that other ladies would visit her and prevent her feeling dull.

When the doctor called he found her crying: he told her some capital stories so that her laugh rang out feebly, and then won over by the excessive kindness of his manner, she confided to him one trouble after another, beginning with Mrs. Hamborough, and ending with the natives.

"It makes me so frightened to think what small numbers we are in," she said, "we are surrounded by people of different colour and different religion, to whom we, as their superiors, must be distasteful. Suppose, only suppose, they should revolt."

"Impossible, quite impossible," replied the doctor, oracularly. "You, as a lady, Mrs. Delaine, naturally don't understand politics; but there's one little big secret I will tell you for your comfort, the natives are divided into two great sects, Mahommedans and Hindus, who dislike one another; that hatred constitutes in a great measure our safety. Remember the fox in the fable. Well, the fox here, is Mr. 'John Company.'" And even as the wise doctor spoke, the chupatties were being rapidly passed! The doctor was, as a rule, of all things, pro-

fessional, perhaps, to-day, the heat had affected him, or he had had extra at tiffin, but Rosamond looking so frail, so lonely and pitiful, in some way stirred his heart; for putting his strong arm round her, he drew her head on to his breast and kissed her. Being a tactful man he saw he had made a mistake, and murmuring apologies, hurried away, leaving Rosamond to indulge in a bitter burst of grief.

She had disobeyed Colonel Colville's injunction and this was the result. She must keep the doctor's terrible behaviour a secret from Lionel. She felt that this was an honourable secret to keep since a duel, or something equally dreadful, might be the result; but their friendship from that day was forever at an end.

CHAPTER IV.

THOSE were not the days for young wives and mothers to be in India, nor for the matter of that, for any Englishman; for with little warning, the storm had burst, and the never-to-be-forgotten horrors of the mutiny were being enacted. Husbands bound fast had full view of the awful indignities perpetrated upon their tortured wives. Wives saw husbands cut slowly to pieces before their eyes. Children – well, never mind about them, if you care for gruesome literature, the daily papers of that date will perhaps satisfy you. Old Indian officers who did splendid work then, don't care to talk of their deeds in connection with certain events now. It is in these days the custom to deny these atrocities; perhaps, for the sake of relatives of the massacred it is quite as well.

The Doctor had told Captain Delaine enough to decide him to take Rosamond away for change, and they were one day's journey from their station, when upon that morning they were awoke by a *sais* who broke in upon them with intelligence that caused the blood to freeze within their veins. The natives had risen, and all their friends were dead! Mrs. Hamborough had been saturated with oil and then set alight; the Doctor had fallen, covered with wounds, in protecting her house. It was a relief to Rosamond to hear that he, at least, had died so comparatively easy a death; he had been so good to her, so very good. And the others were all dead! Captain Delaine recovered himself sufficiently to check the man's recital of further atrocities before his wife, he wanted time to think of securiug their safety. The bearer

had disappeared in the night, carrying with him Lionel's gun, ammunition, horses, everything; only this *sais*, whose life he had once saved, was faithful, and had come to bid him fly, as the Sepoys were already on their track. Through the jungle where the Sahib had been once before, on a bye-path stood a bungalow—Wilkins Sahib's. It was their only chance. Already it might be too late. He would try to bring them *khana*; and Lionel, grasping the man's suggestion, decided upon taking it—starvation and wild animals before Sepoys.

Wilkins Sahib, mad Wilkins, the fellows called him, was an eccentric Englishman, who occasionally abode in this two-roomed bungalow in the jungle; his solitary mode of life, besides the fact that he had once destroyed a man-eater, won him the respect, if not fear, of the natives. If he had a religion, he never tried proselytism and paid respect to their gods; so, on the whole, was not unpopular. If he were there now, his influence might save them; anyhow his bungalow would be a shelter.

Rosamond did not faint or cry now, perhaps hearing of these horrors had stupefied her brain. She was ready to instantly obey any of her husband's commands; without a moment's hesitation the Captain hurried his child wife away into the jungle, and there the two, the husband and wife, with white terrified faces, strained eyes, and panting, sobbing breath ran on—on for their lives, fear lending wings to their feet, agonising fear of knowing that the enemy was fast following on their track.

Think of it, my gallant Major, when after a clinking run, the spent fox has gone to earth, and your voice is loudest in crying 'Dig him out.' Think of it, good Squire, when the trembling hare, with eyes glazed with terror, lies hidden under the cabbages in your labourer's garden, and don't urge that the currant jelly dogs be sent in to break her up. Think of it, when after a glorious morning with the otter hounds, the quarry seeks refuge in a hole, and be satisfied with having shown your fine running and leaping, don't lament not drawing blood. Think of it, ladies, before you buy egrets torn from the little white heron, lying dead beside its hapless brood, even heartless men shudder at the scenes they see, so think before following ever, fashion. Think of it, most of all, ye miscalled Christians, who shrug your shoulders and sneer at those faddists who shriek against a dog being strapped down in a laboratory, while part of its brain is removed, or stimulated by electricity. Rather urge the faddists to greater exertions lest a

bill of indictment should ascend to High Heaven against you, and a Just Judge allow their fate to be yours.

Lionel Delaine thought of many things as he helped his young wife through the tangled paths; carrying her over half dry nullahs and looking piteously at the large blue eyes dimmed with fright. He ardently wished that a tiger would spring from its hidden lair and lay both dead with a blow from its lordly paw. Rosamond's fair hair was now falling loosely over her shoulders: his thoughts flew back to that night when that fair hair and those large blue eyes had so fascinated him—the night of the grand ball at Stannard House. Utterly exhausted they reached the alas, now uninhabited two-roomed bungalow. A snake crept away at their approach. Rosamond suppressed a shudder. The doors were unlocked, and Lionel entered the dark and dirty rooms, then seizing the rusty iron bars he barricaded up the rotten timber, and turning, threw himself at his wife's feet.

"Rosamond, my poor little wife, can you ever forgive me?" and she answered:

"Lion dearest, what have I to forgive." It was the first time she had ever called him anything but his full name.

"I took you away from a happy home to make your life wretched in this accursed land, and now to murder you."

She knelt down in front of him and flung her arms round him with a new freedom.

"Lion dear, if I have been miserable, you must have been the same; it has all been wrong from the beginning, only I was so young and ignorant that I did not know. I was not fit to be your wife. I did not know things like these other people we meet; it was not fair to have married you; so Lion dear, I want *you* to forgive *me*, to forgive me because I was only a child and did not know."

He clasped her in his arms and kissed her, speech deserted him, while her fair face fell upon his shoulder.

"Lion," she sobbed, "I can't help crying, I am so frightened: we shall never escape: it would be so much better if we could both die together now, before they come and find us out."

He drew from his pocket a small pocket pistol, the only weapon he possessed: it contained *one* bullet.

"You shall not fall alive into their hands, I swear, but there is still hope!"

Then in a sudden paroxym of terror, she clung to him, crying:

"Lion, tell me about God ; I want Him, oh, so dreadfully now."

Captain Delaine wanted Him too, he wanted the protection of the despised Redeemer, the rejected Saviour, the jeered-at King—*now*, there was nothing he could tell his wife, but in his agony he clasped his hands and cried aloud "O! Lord Christ ;" they were the only words he could utter, for his throat seemed to close ; perhaps though they were enough. Then he heard sounds that made him rise hastily to his feet and stand firmly erect, a British officer and gentleman. Every pulse was quickened, for the noise proclaimed that the Sepoys were upon them, he drew once more from his pocket the little pistol, and the husband and wife's eyes met.

"It is the only way to save you, my darling, oh! my poor, murdered little wife."

"Give it to me," she panted, "I dare not trust your nerve, it will be easier for me, see, Lion, my hand is quite steady."

She held it out for his inspection, and he turned away his head and groaned. With gentle force she drew the weapon from his grasp, mechanically—noticing even at that awful moment, that it bore the maker's name "W. Jones & Son, London."

Then they stood scarcely daring to breathe, large drops of agony rolling down each face, hours, days, years rolled into those awful moments of suspense. Would the enemy pass? No; suspense was at an end, they were round the bungalow, the ineffectual barricades were being forced. A strange sensation of having lived long years ago through a similar scene of horror came into Rosamond's mind. She was once more in a heated room, sweet with the scent of pines, listening to Colonel Colville's dry dictatic tones, followed by a sense of sickness and terror, and limbs shrinking with dread. It had passed away as a flash, she was back again from Clapham, to India and reality. Over her face came a look of fixed resolution, her expression changed to one of steady resolute purpose, the sensitive lips quivered, then were firmly compressed, she stretched out one small trembling hand, whispering "Look!"

Her husband's eyes were turned from her to the place she indicated and in a moment Rosamond had the muzzle of the pistol at his ear, the trigger pulled, and Captain Lionel Delaine fell forward on his face—saved. The pistol fell from Rosamond's hand just as the frail barrier gave way. Then the Sepoys rushed in.

William Ewart Gladstone.

By SARAH CATHERINE BUDD,

Author of "MOZART," "CARMEN SYLVA," "JAMES PAYN," &c., &c.

THE grey castellated towers of Hawarden in Flintshire, have for many years past had a kind of fascination for the great body of Englishmen, because it has been the home of William Ewart Gladstone. However one may have differed from him, in politics or in religious opinions, all men agree that he was a great and good man. His opponent, Lord Salisbury, generously says of him "The most distinguished political name in this century has been withdrawn from the roll of Englishmen. What he sought was the achievement of great ideals, and whether they were based upon sound convictions or not, they could have issued from nothing but the greatest and purest moral aspirations. He will leave behind him the memory of a great Christian statesman—a great example of a great Christian man."

William Ewart Gladstone was born at 2, Rodney Street, Liverpool, December 29th, 1809, and came from a good old stock.

On his mother's side he could claim descent from the Plantagenets in England and Robert Bruce of Scotland. His father's descent can be traced from the time of Edward I, for Herbert de Gladstone swore fealty to him. The name is supposed to have been taken from the Gladstone or (Hawk's Stone) near Bell Craig in Lanarkshire, where the family estate for some hundreds of years was situated. This estate was in the possession of the family until the close of the 17th century, then they migrated to a town and eventually became merchant princes in Liverpool. John Gladstone, the father of William Ewart, had a baronetcy conferred upon him in 1845 and died in the year of the Great Exhibition, 1851. He lived to be 88 years old and to see his youngest son a Cabinet Minister.

"No one," says Mr. Gladstone, in writing of his father, "except those who have known him in the close intimacy of family life, could properly appreciate the greatness of this remarkable man."

He had no children by his first wife, but he had four sons by his second. This lady was Anne, daughter of the Provost of Stornoway

"of great accomplishments and fascinating manners—one to grace any home, and endear any heart."

Most great men have had good mothers, and thus Mr. Gladstone was no exception to the rule. When William Gladstone was quite young he attended, with his brothers, a school near his home, kept by the Rev. Arthur Jones, afterwards Archdeacon of Liverpool. It is said that when his former pupil became a great financier, the Archdeacon would recount with wicked smiles, how he could never get William to master the simple rules of arithmetic.

In September, 1821, William Ewart Gladstone, then about twelve years old, was entered a pupil at Eton College—that "queen of visible homes for the ideal school boy" as Mr. Gladstone describes it in later years. Here his prime favourite was Arthur Henry Hallam, with whom he had the greatest sympathy.

He used to scull Hallam up to the Shallows, and there they held many a "stiff argument."—

Young Gladstone became a member of the "Debating Society" at Eton, and here it was, in the last year of his residence there, he began his first literary production. The late Bishop Hamilton, of Salisbury, said of his Eton days, "I was a thoroughly idle boy, but I was saved from worse things by getting to know Gladstone." Men who went to Oxford ten years afterwards said, "Undergraduates drank less in the forties, because Gladstone had been so abstemious in the thirties."

In the autumn of 1829 Gladstone was entered as a student at Christ Church College, Oxford. Here he became one of a small band of thoughtful earnest workers, at the same time not unmindful of health or recreation.

In 1831 he took a double first, and held for a short time a Fellowship at All Souls' College. All his contemporaries at Oxford expected him to become famous, and it cannot be said that he belied their expectations.

In 1832, after leaving Oxford, Mr. Gladstone paid a visit to Italy, and soon after was grieved to hear of Arthur Hallam's death at Vienna. "I felt," he writes, "that not only a dear friend had been lost, but a great light had been extinguished."

On January 13th, 1833, Mr. Gladstone was admitted to the Society of Lincoln's Inn, and kept eleven terms.

In 1838 we find him suffering from eye troubles, brought on by hard study and the making of books. He was then ordered abroad

and wintered at Rome. This was a memorable visit, first, because he met Lord Macaulay—who soon afterwards wrote his most brilliant review in the "Edinburgh" on Gladstone's new book "Church and State." Macaulay, writing home at this time, says: "I enjoyed Italy immensely, and met Gladstone at Rome, we talked and walked together during the best part of the afternoon. He is a clever and amiable man." The most important circumstance known in connection with the visit to Rome was that Mr. Gladstone renewed his acquaintance with the widowed Lady Glynne and her daughters. Now the old friendship for Catherine Glynne, soon ripened into love, and the wedding took place at Hawarden Church on July 25th, 1839.

Soon after this marriage Hawarden Castle became a second home to Mr. Gladstone, and on the death of Sir Stephen Glynne, the estates passed entirely into the Gladstone family. Hawarden, became unspeakably dear to Mr. Gladstone; he loved the old park with its fine oaks and beeches, the lawns and sunny glades, and of late years there was the sweet, quaint little Dorothy Drew flitting about the place and making a fair picture wherever she moved.

To speak of Mr. Gladstone's parliamentary career would be manifestly impossible in a slight sketch like the present. It may, however, be mentioned, that he devoted sixty years of his life to Parliamentary labours, was Premier of this country four times, once when he was well over eighty, as far as I know, a feat quite unprecedented.

When Mr. Gladstone finally left Downing Street, an eye witness says he came slowly down the steps with a very grave and thoughtful face. To say farewell for ever to a place is always sad, and solemn thoughts must have surged over Mr. Gladstone at that moment. We are told he bowed very gravely to the onlookers, and then, with his unfailing tenderness to his wife, he carefully placed her in the brougham, and little Dorothy Drew, with her sweet blue eyes and golden locks, came running down the steps behind him, "smiling with glee, and waving gaily her little hand." Truly she was a sight to dispel all sorrowful thoughts.

Mr. Gladstone's oratory, both in the House and out of it, was matchless. An old member of the House once remarked:

"While he is speaking we are all under the spell of the magician: it is only when the thrilling tones of that marvellous voice have ceased that we go into the division lobbies and vote against Mr. Gladstone." Into his political career—the Crimean war—the disestablishment of

the Irish Church—his Home Rule schemes, and other more hotly contested questions, this is not the place to enter, but we have rising in our minds his deep sympathy with downtrodden races—the Greeks the Bulgarians, the Poles.

It is quite astonishing that with all his public labours Mr. Gladstone should have found time to write books. He did, however, as the British Museum catalogue can witness. We have only space, however, to mention two, both connected with theology. These were his first and last works. "Church and State" was the first book which greatly brought him into notice as a writer, and the last was called "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," which first came out in "Good Words."

As may be imagined, Mr. Gladstone was a great reader and judge of books, even of recent ones. His Homeric studies are well known, and he generally kept three entirely different books on hand, that he might refresh himself by change of thought. He was one of the first to find out the merits of "John Inglesant" after it had been read in M.S., and rejected by James Payn, who scarcely ever made a mistake. Mr. Gladstone preferred Sir Walter Scott to Dickens, or Thackeray, and two of his favourite books were "The Bride of Lammermoor" and "Kenilworth."

Mr. Gladstone, too, enjoyed social intercourse with marvellous zest, and of course was much sought after. Mrs Gladstone also entered into all his schemes and plans with the greatest enthusiasm. We hear that once when a Liberal victory had just been announced, she exclaimed, "Oh, I must drive home immediately and tell William." Thus this beautiful old couple were one in everything. Her wish was always his law. We are told that at an evening party, the hostess begged the aged statesman to sit down and rest.

"Oh, no, thank you," said Mr. Gladstone.

"Ah," said the lady, "you know Mrs. Gladstone would insist on it if she were here."

Immediately, with a smile, Mr. Gladstone sat down.

Lord Tennyson and Gladstone were great friends. We find the poet writing in his diary in 1865 :

"The great man, Gladstone, is coming to dine with us on Friday—a compliment ; but how he can find time from the mighty press of business amazes me."

Later on, when the Gladstones visited Aldworth, Lord Tennyson"

Haslemere home, he says: "Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone frisked about like boy and girl in the heather—he is a noble fellow and perfectly unaffected.

It may be remembered that Mr. Gladstone was once a guest of his great opponent, Lord Salisbury, at Hatfield, of whom he used to remark, "I can never think unkindly of Lord Salisbury since the day when I saw him as a little child, in a red frock!" We may be excused perhaps, in passing, to ask "can we imagine Lord Salisbury as a child in a red frock?"

And now we come to the closing scenes of this great and good man's life. He had, indeed, "fought the fight and finished his course," but our hearts are sore, even while we remember that he was very sweet and patient, longing but not murmuring at the "length of the way." Mr. Drew tells us of his touching and perfect submission to the will of God. On one occasion before Mr. Gladstone took to his bed, he was walking feebly up and down his "Temple of Peace,"—as he always called his study—assisted by Mr. Drew. He then spoke freely of his yearning for rest, his longing for release from the burden of his life, and the heaviness of the dispensation.

"But," he added, solemnly pausing, "I remain totally unshaken in my resolute belief in the wisdom and love of God."

We must not linger—the sad details are familiar to us all. One of his favourite hymns was "Rock of Ages," his last word "Amen;" and as the fair light of Ascension Day, 1898, began to break over this earth, he opened his weary eyes on a brighter Ascension Day than ours. All the world conspired to honour him in death, kings and emperors, rich and poor. Our own Queen sent most touching telegrams. Fitting was it that England should give him a public funeral, and lay him to rest in our grand old Westminster Abbey. and that two future Kings of England should be pall bearers. I cannot resist quoting a few words of one who was an eye-witness of the funeral. He writes: "There were no startling, echoing noises, which sometimes clash against the stillness of such occasions, the stately height of the arches extinguished the echoes, and battled vainly against the Abbey's great gift of silence." Then he goes on to say, "If, turning from the living faces, one glanced towards the place in the north transept where the grave lay open, there, too, in that crowded space of glorious death, with marble inflexible features, stood statesman, lawgivers, soldiers, the builders of the Empire, stiffly waiting

to welcome one of their peers within their midst." And when it was all over, he says : "Mr. Gladstone's children still knelt by the grave, shaken with human grief. Round that illustrious grave, in sight of that bereaved wife, the highest and lowest were moved to tears. At last Mrs. Gladstone's two sons raised her and she sat in the chair, placed for her, at the head of the grave. Then the Prince of Wales crossed to her and stooping kissed her hand. There could have been no homage more perfect, no act of sympathy more kindly and sincere."

* * * *

The eyes of England now are sorrowfully fixed upon Mrs. Gladstone. She has borne well the stress and strain of parting from her beloved, and kept back the outward expression of her grief as much as possible, and while there was anything to do, to show him honour, she was ready to do it ; but the re-action must come. Yes, like echoing footsteps in a bare and empty house, so there are awful, and yearning echoes and cries for our departed, in our bare and stricken hearts. And even to our weak, pathetic fancy, in the peace and rest and glory of the new life on which our dear ones have entered, it still seems to us, in moments of weakness, that even there we shall be missed and needed. The silence of the grave, too, is so profound. Jean Ingelow pathetically asks,

"Is there never a chink in the world above,
Where they listen for words from below."

No. We must bear the separation and the silence.
